# TOWARD A PROCESS THERAPY:

## *An Integration of Perception and Concrescence from Whitehead With the Self Modes and Gestalt Formation from Gestalt Therapy*

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A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of
The School of Theology at Claremont

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

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by
David Edward Roy
May 1978

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*This dissertation, written by*

David Edward Roy

*under the direction of* his *Faculty Committee, and approved by its members, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

***DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY***

*Faculty Committee*

Paul Schurman
*Chairman*

John B. Cobb Jr.

Allen J. Moore

*Date* March 6, 1978

Joseph C. Hough

UMI

# DEDICATION

*To Rachel, who made it possible.*

*To Dylan, who made it richer.*

*May this in turn make the possible richer.*

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower

Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees

Is my destroyer.

And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose

My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

From *The Collected Poems* by Dylan Thomas,
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My urgings toward imaginative pursuit of fundamentals have been promoted and guided by many, and supported by many others. Some special persons fall into both categories.

Marian Tripp Roy, who is not alive to share in this conclusion, felt both her deepest faith and greatest doubts in response to these kinds of issues. What she shared with me became my initial, if not final, concerns. My parents, Raymond and Rachel Roy, have provided strongly needed moments of interest and support, particularly as the ordeal drew to a close. My brother, Tom, knows what the quest is all about, and has chosen his own path. Frances Ruskin sets a powerful model of a life-long spiritual pursuit of self-healing and renewed questioning.

Two groups stimulated a good portion of the vision I am still working out. One was a core of fellow graduate students at the University of Arizona (and our music). The other was the group of fellow trainees (and trainers) at the Gestalt Therapy Institute of Los Angeles. Other friends who influenced me before (and toward) seminary include Richard Gorby, Lee Scott, Thomas Navin, Dick Johnson, Bill Rogers, and Dorothy and Gary Gruver.

The First Congregational Church of Los Angeles has provided me with an opportunity to grow professionally as a therapist in the context of a church-sponsored counseling center. My colleagues at the center have tolerated my pursuit, and hopefully will gain something from it. My clients have provided the stimulus for professional (and

personal) growth, as well as the bedrock experience behind the theorizing.

My experience at Claremont deepened me far beyond what I "knew" to be possible. So many of the relationships here have been important, and some of them quite enduring. My fellow students have provided me with an important web of ideas and challenges as only peers can.

So, too, the faculty, though in a different way. First, my committee: Paul Schurman, who chaired my committee, provided me with room to grow and sharp, essential questions by which I've grown. John Cobb led me into theology before I knew what was happening. His influence has been profound, variable yet pervasive, from my first class at Claremont through the crucible of the dissertation. Allen Moore has shared his own seeking and his blunt yet precise analysis at key points.

There are important others who, at one time or another, have been formally and informally with me. Frank Kimper led me into Gestalt Therapy, and into theological reflection at the deepest levels of his own person. Howard Clinebell led me into pastoral counseling, and is still leading me into the field. Growth *is* the primary and ultimate issue. David Griffin took a "hardship" sabbatical in Santa Barbara as I was in the midst of writing this, but his influence is noted, and I look forward to additional work together.

I also drew significantly from Joe Hough, Patty Doyle, and Steve Fahrion, as well as Eric Titus, Hans Dieter Betz, Jack Coogan, Tom Trotter, Dan Rhoades, and Bob Arnott, among others. John Overturf has been an excellent guide into my own experience during this process.

A special appreciation goes to our Pomona friends who supported us all the way. Bill McNamara, in particular, provided invaluable assistance by allowing me to work in a spare room at his Pomona Valley Mortuary. I appreciate Dick Denton's careful and detailed review of the manuscript, and Mary Anne Parrott's exceptionally accurate and fast typing (and her patience). Linda Rice along with Shairon and Carol of Mary B. Eyre School helped by providing loving care for Dylan.

Rachel Lea Ruskin joined paths with me shortly before I came to seminary. We have learned to grow separately together while we have been here, which has brought us closer together. Dylan Michael joined us along the way, and is convinced that dissertations never get done--just almost done. This has been a difficult time for the family side of our relationships, and this has led to our successful struggle to enlarge this mutual participation.

# EXPLANATION OF REFERENCE AND FOOTNOTE STYLE

The vast majority of references in the dissertation are from a handful of sources, primarily two. The style of citation adopted for these works is used in process thought publications. The abbreviation and page references are enclosed in parentheses and included in the text. Thus "(*PR* 250)" means that the material quoted or discussed is to be found on page 250 of *Process and Reality*. Standard footnotes are used for those works not frequently cited, as well as for textual commentary. In Chapter 3, all references are from one work, Whitehead's *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect*. Hence, only the page numbers are included in the text. The full bibliography of relevant literature is included at the end of the dissertation.

Below are the primary works and their abbreviations:

| | |
|---|---|
| *PR* | *Process and Reality* (Whitehead) |
| *GT* | *Gestalt Therapy* (Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman) |
| *EHA* | *Ego, Hunger and Aggression* (Perls) |
| *GA* | *The Gestalt Approach* and *Eye Witness to Therapy* (Perls) |
| *TGTB* | *The Gestalt Therapy Book* (Latner) |

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of the dissertation is to approach the development of the theory behind a thoroughly process-oriented therapy. The immediate task of the dissertation is the integration of Whitehead's process thought with the theory behind Gestalt Therapy. The integration centers on Whitehead's theories of concrescence and perception, and Gestalt Therapy's theories of gestalt formation and of the self. Through careful analysis of the formal dynamics involved, the material is brought to a conclusion with a summary, four-way integration. Preceding this there are several preliminary integrations within and between the two major systems.

The concluding four-way integration states that the id mode of the self, where reality is experienced as causally efficacious, basically correlates with the stage of fore-contact and the phase of physical feelings. The ego mode of the self, where reality is experienced as immediately presented, basically correlates with the stage of projective contact and the phase of propositional feelings (at least those which involve the world as the locus in the presented duration). The middle mode of the self, where there is the reference between the symbol (usually supplied by presentational immediacy) and the meaning (usually supplied by causal efficacy), basically correlates with the stage of retroflective contact and the phase of intellectual feelings. Final contact also is associated with the phase of intellectual feelings at the conclusion or satisfaction of the occasion. The suggestion is made to add a contact stage created from Gestalt Therapy's discussion of de-structuring. This is correlated with the phase of conceptual feelings. This phase is shown to be the "divide" between the two primary self and perceptual modes.

The assertion is offered that the two primary modes (the id/causal efficacy and the ego/presentational immediacy) in their integration (in the middle mode/symbolic reference) lie behind and produce by their variable interaction our variable yet unified subjective experience. The conclusion is offered that the id mode is concerned with delivering the given into the subject in a conformal fashion. The given may be physical actuality or conceptual possibility. The ego mode is concerned with discriminating in detail the given which has been conformally accepted. The discrimination is accomplished by the creation of theories (propositions) about the status of the given (normally in the here-and-now). These theories may be accurate (perceptive) or imaginative. The middle mode is the intersection of these two primary modes. In this mode the theory is compared with the actual given; this comparison results in awareness.

Implications for philosophy, the Church, psychotherapy, and pastoral counseling are explored. The theology inherent in the process of therapy is lifted into greater prominence by Whitehead. Therapy, as with all experience, involves the activity of God at each instance of becoming--in temporal language, "all the time." This perspective has value for all the fields, including pastoral counseling. The view emphasizes this field's uniqueness and its potential to influence the creation of new forms of therapy which are more effective than ones which are similar but not theologically informed. This latter is an empirical thrust anticipated by this study.

# Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

Frequently while writing this dissertation I asked myself, "What am I doing?" "Why am I writing this section?" Sometimes I seemed to move sideways, away from the center I wanted to pursue--only to find myself returning in an unexpected and new way to the original themes. This process made it difficult for me to know the overall answer to the question I kept asking myself: "What have I done; how much is left?" Now that this is finished, I no longer expect to have an answer to that question, for the question has changed: "What next? Where does this lead me now?" This was actually the question I kept answering all the way along. I would outline or reread what I had written in order to find the form I was creating. Virtually every time I did I found myself leaping ahead, plunging in new directions.

## A. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Yet the reader of this relatively arbitrary slice of the larger picture that seems to be emerging for me (or within me) has a right to an idea as to where I have been--what they can expect to find that has been either demonstrated or indicated in the version which follows. This will be approached in several ways. First will be a discussion of the immediate and the larger tasks of this dissertation. Second will be a description of the inherently theological nature of the larger task and a suggestion as to how this may aid the field of pastoral counseling to move beyond an "in-addition-to" stance. Next will be a

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brief analysis of "process" from the perspective of both major systems, with some remarks on the value of this orientation for therapy.

Following this will be general comments on the nature of *reality as experience* from Whitehead's theory of the nature of reality. This will help orient the reader to Whitehead's thought in an area that is generally and strongly meaningful (we all "experience").

The latter portion of the chapter gives an indication of the general conclusions and the themes which build to these conclusions. This will precede the chapter summaries which expand these general themes. The chapters are the "vehicles" by means of which the major themes are carried to their conclusions. My own more personal conclusions will end the chapter.

### 1. *Task of the Dissertation: Larger and Immediate*

The larger project toward which this dissertation points is the development of a theory of personality and an allied therapeutic approach from a process perspective. This larger task--as will be discussed below--is inherently theological. The larger purpose is approached by the immediate and primary task of this dissertation, namely to present an intuitive and a reasonable integration of basic concepts from Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead. This integration, as I have wrestled with it through many pages, should not be viewed as complete in any real sense. A *true* integration would be the creation of a new whole out of the many diverse elements. This new whole eventually will be expressed in the larger task. This dissertation is one step along the way. In that regard, serious attempts have been made to approach the formal understanding necessary for the true integration.

One attempt required that significant care be taken with the details of each of the major systems. As has been noted by some who have examined incomplete portions of the manuscript, an attempt has been made to write from within each system while nonetheless keeping the other system in mind. The detail with which Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead are presented is a way of keeping track of the accuracy of my conclusions. It also serves to provide the basis for further reflection by others. Beyond that, there has been the lure of an intuitively followed "scent" that seems to be inherently complex when pursuing fundamentals.

Beyond this, the integration is approached in periodically expressed general statements which illustrate the formal similarities involved in the two systems. The additional internal summary integrations (made within and between the two systems) also move toward this fuller integration. Finally, this is behind the explicit pointing from one system to the other which is begun in this chapter and carried on throughout.

### 2. *Theological Nature of the Project*

The relation this project has to its larger purpose is essentially theological. The aim is to create a system of therapy which can be used in practice and used to organize what is going on in the practice--the theory. This theory, informed by what is here developed, will be theological by virtue of being informed by Whitehead's theology; and eventually by being more explicitly informed by and integrated with process theology. In the ideal, the therapy and its theory would be the Word in the World, in a particularly intense form. *By demonstrating that one is speaking, not of two separate worlds, but of one "world," when discussing theology and therapy, one has made the theology inherent in the latter explicit.* This is the particular stance taken here. The theology, that is, is inherent in what is being done, and the later task will be to spell this out more completely and more systematically.

This dissertation provides the basis for this. The theology which is present here is made explicit at times, particularly in the latter half of the project. God's role in the World, in the process of concrescence, is developed by Whitehead in such a way as to show that God is central to the development of each instance of creation, to the development of one instance out of the preceding, as well as the advance from instance to instance. This is covered in Chapter 4 in the discussion of creativity and the creative advance, as well as in the explanation of the superjective role of God's initial (and ideal) aim for each becoming subject. This aim--which can be defined as the divine lure, or grace--is an outcome of God's primoridal nature (the ordering of *all* pure potentials) and God's consequent nature (the positive prehension or feeling by God of each occasion in the universe). If the similarities between a gestalt and an actual occasion are accepted, then it is clear that the formation of a gestalt is inherently guided by God in every single instance. If it is clear that a gestalt is formed by (and forms) the self, then the self (a special instance of an actual occasion) is guided by God in its successive stances--in temporal language, "all the time."

### 3. *Value to Pastoral Counseling*

The value to the field of pastoral counseling is that this approach can move us away from attempting to "add on" the theology, or the psychology, to the other pole of our professional identity. *It is my hope that this eventually will lead to new forms of treatment for persons*, forms that can be applied universally (to all manner of problems), and in an empirical sense can be demonstrated as *more effective than approaches which are similar but not so informed.* This empirical task is down the road, though I have done a pilot project, and plan to do more. At the church-sponsored counseling center where I am employed, I conducted a "spiritual growth" workshop. It grew out of the early stages of this material. Its order was suggested by Whitehead (for the most part) while its content was supplied by Gestalt Therapy (for the most part). There was some cross connection; for example, the affirmation of the body as the ground of all experience is made both by Whitehead and Gestalt Therapy. Additionally, there were one or two exercises that were developed straight from material concerning the perceptual modes. This initial step can be followed by a more structured approach (perhaps an on-going class) which will allow for greater intensity to develop, for more accurate feedback, for the corresponding development of relevant materials to accompany the study and the experience. It is from this more structured experience, as well, that operational definitions can be created and then tested.

Beyond that, I am finding that the material worked with in this project (and that certainly worked within me!) is increasingly informing my work as a therapist. I can see more richly into the soul of another. Knowledge of the process of concrescence is increasingly informing where I look and what I emphasize, for example.

## 4. *"Process" for Whitehead and Gestalt Therapy*

The essence of the term *process* is what is most obvious. It may be described as putting an emphasis on experience or experienc*ing* (in the here-and-now) instead of on *things*. Reality from this view is a host of occasions of experiences which develop, are completed, then followed by more such occasions. Each occasion of experience is created out of the occasions of the past, and orients itself toward experiences yet to become. These two features--becoming and relating--are the two basic meanings of the word for Whitehead.

When this perspective is applied to understanding the essential nature of human beings, the result is a sometimes subtle and sometimes startling change of world view. Gestalt Therapy is one therapy which generally emphasizes this process perspective, sometimes quite strongly. *Awareness*[1] is a book of exercises for individuals and groups. In it are a number of exercises that fit this perspective. One is explicitly to this point, focusing on the development of a process-oriented language. The goal is changing one's awareness of reality as a collection of things to a process of experienc*ing*. This orientation, which

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[1] John O. Stevens, *Awareness* (Lafayette, CA: Real People Press, 1971).

Gestalt Therapy generally maintains, has important implications for therapists and clients, as well as the theory behind the practice.

One implication is an enhanced appreciation for the potential for change. Instead of being aware of a tension--"somewhere" in the "distance"--persons can become aware that they are tensing themselves. The perspectives drives toward the conclusion that the persons are ultimately responsible for their experience--that they are not filled with things but are ultimately their own, self-created experience. Another inescapable conclusion is that an individual is a whole, ultimately, and not a collection of things. Persons also find their essential relatedness to be as true as their essential separateness.

### 5. *Whitehead's Nature of Reality*

In *Process and Reality*, Whitehead develops two descriptions of reality. One is the process of becoming (also called *concrescence*) and the other is the process of perception. Both have to do with experience--of becoming and of perception. In many ways, experience is synonymous with the nature of reality for Whitehead; this is the essence of the subject's nature (the experience of objects), and of the object's nature (where the process of experiencing and of integrating this experience has achieved its final form of definiteness). Reality, that is, is made up out of these "drops of experience," a phrase Whitehead borrows from William James. These "drops" are termed *actual occasions* or *actual entities* by Whitehead. These occasions are the final, indivisible, most real elements of the universe. They are feelings *of* other feelings in past occasions.

In Chapter 5, there are some comments on how to approach Whitehead for the reader unfamiliar with his language. By now, this problem may be emerging. I have worked to avoid some of the unnecessary diversity of terms, as well as to provide frequent definitions or other more familiar reminders along the way. Yet much of the complexity is inherently unavoidable, and ultimately richly rewarding--once the reader has achieved an intuitive feel for the material. As stated in Chapter 5, the only way to really do this is to read and reread *Process and Reality*. Aids can be helpful, yet they can be barriers. Whitehead is still, for better or worse, his own best interpreter. (The difficulty with *PR* is part of the reason for Chapter 3; this chapter is a summary of his theory of perception taken from an earlier and clearer account.)

## B. PRIMARY THEME: INTEGRATION

The primary theme of this dissertation is *integration*, both as to method of organization and as to the nature of the material under analysis and development. The concept is discussed from the perspective of its *process* and its *outcome*, as well as the *experience* of integration. The theme is looked at from two different perspectives: Whitehead's analysis of the nature of reality and the theory of Gestalt Therapy's approach to the healing art as applied to one major aspect of reality--the human being.

### 1. *Whitehead: Concrescence and Perception*

The above is a statement of this primary theme. This theme is broken down further within each system before being rejoined. In

Whitehead's system this is looked at in terms of the process of becoming (concrescence) and perception. Concrescence is discussed in terms of the integration of feelings within a subject (which process defines the subject), as well as in terms of the objects of these feelings. These objects are analyzed further, as are the feelings. The analysis of objects includes a look at important features of the final, indivisible unit of reality (the actual occasion) and the pure, formal essence of these occasions (eternal objects). The several features amount to the principles governing both the becoming of the subject and ways of describing how and what is involved in this process--how fact and form are blended. (The notion of platonic form is one aspect of an eternal object; the other is the relational quality inherent in these objects.) Perception is viewed in a parallel fashion. For the perceiver, perception also involves an integration. The conclusion of these two themes (concrescence and perception) is that they are alternate, if not always equivalent, ways of describing the nature of reality in its fundamental essence--as the process of becoming real.

### 2. *Gestalt Therapy: Gestalt Formation and the Self Modes*

Gestalt Therapy is examined primarily from the perspective of its earliest formulations where the theory was more explicitly (if not always clearly) stated. The two major features examined are 1) the nature of a gestalt (the unified whole of experience and perception), including how it comes into being; and 2) the nature of the perceiving self, discussed in terms of its modes of experiencing and integrating what it experiences. Each of the two major aspects within Gestalt

Therapy (gestalt formation and the self modes) are broken down into descriptive features or sub-components. These include contact (feelings in Whitehead's sense) as well as the stages of contact which form a gestalt, the modes or ways of making contact, the nature of the figure-ground whole at each stage, and the mode of the self at each stage. These are brought together at the end into a more unified and summary account. This account is seen as descriptive of the various features of the self as it is formed by-forms itself out of its experience. A suggestion is made for an additional contact stage which is consistent with Gestalt Therapy and relevant for the four-way integration.

## C. FINAL (FOUR-WAY) INTEGRATION

In the final integration attempted in the dissertation, these two major integrations (one within Whitehead and one within Gestalt Therapy) are taken apart in order to produce two preliminary integrations between each of the major systems. Then, the final, four-way integration is summarized. All of this will be introduced here.

### 1. *Gestalt Formation and Concrescence*

This is approached in two ways. The first is in the integration of the major (and more "static") concepts of each system. The second way this is approached is in the integration of the *dynamics* of concrescence--the specific stages (for Gestalt Therapy) and phases (for Whitehead's theory of concrescence).

Both the more static and the more dynamic portions of the theories show the fundamental similarity and correspondence of the various stages and phases. The conclusion is that these two theories are descriptive of essentially the same process, though there are important differences attributable to differences in scale and purpose, as well as rigor. Another important difference is that imposed by Whitehead's understanding of the non-temporal nature of the process of becoming. Concrescence defines time and not the other way around. This theme is returned to several times, both because of its importance and because it is so inherently difficult to grasp. Though there are flashes of this understanding implicit in Gestalt Therapy, there is nothing which approaches Whitehead's rigor on this point.

### 2. *Modes of the Self and of Perception*

The second preliminary integration draws together the three self modes of Gestalt Therapy and the three perceptive modes of Whitehead. At one level this is a far easier integration to make and to see. The complexity of concrescence is reduced, and these two sets of modes are intuitively more capable of being related to our own experience and therefore are more meaningful. This particular integration was also the starting point for this project about two years ago. I suspect this is so because these modes are developed on a broader scale, making their formal similarities easier to detect. The conclusion is made that the two systems are describing essentially the same process at different levels of generality. The difference is less than in the other preliminary integration. This is due in part to the fact that Whitehead deals extensively with human perception, an issue that has been of interest to philosophy for centuries.

When something, such as the nature of our own perceptive processes, relates to us at our center of meaning, it is easier to strike an interest. This is why, in the description of concrescence, I mention that we are a special instance of one of these actual occasions. Our self-aware self is an actual occasion; in this sense we "live inside" such an occasion. We can relate our experience--unique to be sure--to all elements or reality, even if not the experience of awareness or consciousness. This is also why I express in personal terms my excitement with Whitehead's vision, as well as what it has done to my own.

### 3. *Final Integration*

The final conclusion (a portion of this vision) is that the way is pointed toward seeing the fundamental similarities in the process philosophy and the process-oriented therapy. Both attempt to describe the nature of reality, even if from different levels of generality and for different reasons. When I began this project I felt that it would be difficult to see what Gestalt Therapy could contribute to Whitehead's thought; the movement seemed to be in the other direction. That is, I expected to find that Whitehead's system offered both more profound explanations for what Gestalt Therapy was describing, as well as more profound organization of the material. My expectations were fulfilled, more completely or beyond what I had expected.

Yet the opposite direction was not as insignificant for me as I had anticipated. Gestalt Therapy provides illustrations without which Whitehead sometimes lacks impact--at least until one gets inside the flow of his system. This power to illustrate is not at all insignificant or low-grade. Without this counterpoint provided by Gestalt Therapy (which is directly and vitally concerned with the nature of my own experience as a person and a therapist) I doubt I would have made the bridge to Whitehead's thought. This for me intuitively suggests the theoretical and empirical richness of this therapy, beyond what its founder perhaps would have acknowledged.

The power to illustrate moves far beyond providing nice, discrete examples. The power to illustrate also belongs to Whitehead, in his system's power to organize the conceptual portion of reality. Yet this is at only one level of actuality, the highest in the sense of complexity, but not necessarily the most profound in and of itself. Whitehead can describe the profound profoundly. But it takes another step to complete this process, to make it actual in the full and physical sense. To add richness of variety and inherently corresponding intensity is the aim of God, as described by Whitehead. *This is what therapy is all about*, involving itself in the real lives of real people. Perls, in other words, had this power to make mentality into physical actuality--to take thought at its most profound level and bring it into the world. That he concerned himself much more with the methods of "bringing" is his essential value in the world, and his complement in the fullest sense of the word to Whitehead's vision. Mentality complements the physically actual just as the physically actual complements mentality. The two together bring God into the World and the World into God.

## D. ORDER OF CHAPTERS

This will be a closer look at the concepts and how they are developed in each of the chapters. Here what is taken apart will be given more specific content, and there will be some introduction to specific arguments to be encountered in the material.

### Chapter 2: *Gestalt Therapy*

This chapter includes a review of some of the major concepts of Gestalt Therapy. One set of them can be grouped under the heading of gestalt formation--the process by which the perceptual whole comes into being. The formative process is described as a progression of *stages of contact* where *contact* means not simply being in touch with the given, but also the "work" of forming this whole. These stages are also described by their characteristic *mode* of contact (confluence, introjection, projection, retroflection, and egotism). The addition of a stage and a mode of contact called "de-structuring" is proposed. It is placed prior to projection, following introjection. Each stage also has its characteristic *figure-ground* formulation. Other concepts discussed in this context include the *ego* and the *id*, as well as the *self*. All of this is brought together in a succession of integrative summaries.

The second part of this chapter is a description of the self as functioning in three modes. They are the id, the ego, and the middle mode. This notion of the self in three modes forms a part of the early writings of Gestalt Therapy. Frederick ("Fritz") Perls is considered by most to be the primary founder of this school of therapy.[2] As Perls was trained in Freudian psychoanalysis, it is not surprising that the terms for two of the three modes of the self bear a strong relationship, through their names if not description, to some of Freud's concepts. As Perls continued to separate himself from Freud, his use of the Freudian labels diminished. The dynamics behind the labels, though, continue to show up.

The id mode and the ego mode are, in a sense, primary. These are the balanced opposites which, in interaction, form the middle mode. The id mode is characterized by acceptance of the given, the ego mode by engagement with the given. The middle mode is the self in its discovering-creating of the final figure, the solution to the need of the moment.

The whole of this description is brought together into a final synthesis of self modes and gestalt formation. Each of the self modes, in a sense, is predominant during some and not other of the stages of contact (gestalt formation). The middle mode is the final integration, yet it is present throughout. The middle mode is really the term for the process of integration of the two primary modes. These two are also present throughout; dominance per se does not mean exclusion.

The chapter is concluded with two features. One is an examination of the continuance of the dynamics, if not the labels, of these self modes in selected portions of the later writings in the field (in the styles of the neurotic and in the concept of awareness). The other is the suggestion for de-structuring to be considered as a contact stage and mode in between introjection and projection. This last feature anticipates the overall integration of Whitehead with Gestalt Therapy in Chapter 5.

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[2] See Martin Shepard, *Fritz* (New York: Dutton, 1975); also Joen Fagan and Irma Lee Shepherd (eds.) *Gestalt Therapy Now* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 2; and Claudio Naranjo, "Contributions of Gestalt Therapy," in Herbert A. Otto and John Mann (eds.) *Ways of Growth* (New York: Viking Press, 1968), p. 128.

### Chapter 3: *Whitehead's Theory of Perception from Symbolism*

This is the briefest chapter. It concerns itself with an introduction to Whitehead's theory of perception from an earlier account devoted exclusively to this one topic. It is designed to introduce the reader to Whitehead's thought in a discussion that is not as formidible as *Process and Reality*. The theory of perception, for the most part, is carried forward into the mature work without much alteration--except by way of addition. (As Gestalt Therapy would affirm, the context makes a profound difference.)

Perception is described in three modes, two direct. The direct are the modes of *causal efficacy* and *presentational immediacy*. The former is the experience of the past "causing" us; as being effective within us. The latter is our experience of the immediately presented--what is before us now, out there, around us. The two are described as complementary opposites. In causal efficacy, the past and the future are directly experienced, while the present is known only indirectly. In presentational immediacy, the converse is the case. In causal efficacy, location is known only vaguely (with the exception of the body, where localization in this mode is more clearly perceived). In presentational immediacy, location is known clearly and directly. Both are linked by commonality of location and of the *sense-data*--the objects of perception. (In *PR*, these sense-data are equated with eternal objects, the pure possibilities realized in the objects of our perception.)

Causal efficacy also is described as our usual source of meaning whereas presentational immediacy is our usual source of the symbol. The reference between symbol and meaning is the function of *symbolic reference*. This mode, that is, is the integration of the two pure or direct modes, and is both what we normally call perception and the source of error.

## Chapter 4: *Process and Reality*

This chapter is lengthy and complex for it attempts to summarize and relate material within the theory of *concrescence* (becoming), as well as between concrescence and *perception*. There is no really good stopping point to the description of concrescence, and little point in reviewing in any complexity what is included. A summary of the main features: the two primary kinds of objects are the *actual occasion* and the *eternal object*. The former is the indivisible unit of reality, the "atoms" out of which all is formed: planets, rocks, plants, human beings. Eternal objects are the pure possibilities which are the determinative features of actuality. In one sense they are the forms of the occasions when occasions are viewed as subjects. In the other sense, they are the means of relating object to object--essential to the process of becoming an occasion. Also included are Whitehead's concept of *prehensions* (the feelings which, when integrated, are the subject); the nature and function of God in the universe; and a close look at the "self" as one example of an actual occasion.

The organization of the chapter includes the concepts mentioned above grouped into a section on the major concepts of concrescence; this might be seen as more static than the following section. The next grouping deals with the phases of concrescence. If any single portion of the dissertation is the key to the themes and organization developed here, it is this section. Accordingly it is extensively developed. By the time this material is worked through, the reader should have some degree of an intuitive sense of the similarity between the contact stages of gestalt formation and the concrescent process.

The concluding portion of the chapter integrates the theory of perception with concrescence. There is particular emphasis on the importance of the mode of perception called presentational immediacy (which relates to the ego mode and to propositions). Also drawn together are causal efficacy (related to the more primitive id mode) and physical feelings, as well as symbolic reference (the middle mode of the self, in essence) and intellectual feelings. *Sensa* (which may function as sense-data) are discussed as the equivalent to the pure possibilities (eternal objects).

### Chapter 5: *Integration of Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead*

This chapter first examines the major concepts of gestalt formation and concrescence and draws out the similarities between the self and the dominant occasion, a gestalt and an actual occasion, and contact and prehension. In this discussion more specific themes are examined and related from Whitehead to Gestalt Therapy.

The next portion of the chapter presents the concluding integrations. First examined are the self modes and the perceptual modes. It is concluded here that the two theories (self and perception) are highly compatible. One can basically equate the id mode with causal efficacy, the ego mode with presentational immediacy, and the middle mode with symbolic reference in terms of their descriptive features and/or dynamics. Next is developed the integration of gestalt formation and concrescence in terms of their general characteristics and in terms of their specific features. These are presented in a fairly abstract summary of each theory. It is concluded, on the basis of their strong similarity, that most of the stages fit or correspond with all but the phase of physical purposes. This phase is included, however, because of its important role in endurance, among other features.

Finally all of this is brought together in a summary integration of each of the four facets. The id mode where reality is experienced as causally efficacious is seen as correlating with the stage of fore-contact and the phase of physical feelings. The ego mode is where reality is perceived as immediately presented, and basically correlates with the stage of projective contact and the phase of propositional feelings. The middle mode of the self, which involves reference between the symbol (usually supplied by presentational immediacy) and the meaning (usually supplied within the subject/occasion by causal efficacy) basically correlates with the stage of retroflective contact and the phase of intellectual feelings. Final contact seems to correlate with satisfaction, the conclusion of concrescence.

This actually concludes the specific task of the dissertation. The concluding discussion which follows makes more explicit some of the assertions inherent in the preceding. The primary assertion is that these two primary modes interact to produce our unified experience. There are also some remarks on the perception of monsters as real; this is an attempt to "flesh out" some of the features stemming from the interactive operation of certain kinds of feelings. The two primary self modes are redefined at the end of the chapter.

### Chapter 6: *Implications of the Study*

The concluding chapter explores some of the implications for several of the prospective audiences: pastoral counselors, the Church, psychotherapy (particularly Gestalt Therapy), and process thought (particularly Whitehead's). This exploration is by no means exhaustive, though it is intended to arouse both interest and discussion on a level a little less abstract than the preceding material. The theological base to the process of a moment's experience (the most basic unit) is more fully developed here, as well.

### *Appendices*

There are eleven brief essays included as appendices. These explore some of the aspects of the various kinds of feelings and their objects (from Whitehead's system) as they are involved in issues of therapy. These essays were culled from close to 100 pages of ideas that emerged along the way. They really are the vague preliminary to the process therapy at which this dissertation aims.

## E. CONCLUSION

Yet all of this, for me, is merely preparation for the aim at the larger purpose. The aim is to develop a more thoroughly process-oriented therapy, one that taps into this vital essence which Whitehead calls creativity, with God being its chief exemplification and primary source. I do not know when and in what form this will come. I do know, now, that I can trust that this will come to pass, in some form or another. As I began this introduction: what seems to be a tangent becomes wedded to the central pursuit, which looks more and more like God.

I can look back over my life from the perspective of this creating process. It has given me a profound focus, an intensified perspective by which to organize what I have experienced along the way, and the clearer sense to allow this to happen. This marks a true and definite stage for me in my personal process of development. What pain I have experienced along the way has been intensified by this current process of creation to the point that I have seen--better, felt--the necessity of allowing my internal structure to break up and come together in a new way; as well as the fact this is happening in this process and has been even before.

Another way to put this is that seemingly unrelated meanings have begun to come together. Sometimes they come together too fast--at least the experience is terrifying. Everything seems to flow together, and anything I do to stop this from happening literally hurts.

God's aim may be a lure, as John B. Cobb affirms. But the lure felt in its fullness becomes an unyielding demand for purity that is beyond perfection. Perfection, at least for me, is a rigidity that inhibits the expression of the purely essential.

All of this sounds so serious, and at one level it is. Yet the humor, the fun, is also another form of this vitality. This is what I am moving toward in my own life, in part by completing this project. It is hard to make jokes about Whitehead, or using Whitehead. Yet joking is an expression of joy; the laughter of what is also pain--not a disguise, but as a variable form, a way of releasing in the sense of letting go. I love my son's laughter; I look forward to more of my own as I let go of this stage of my life. I can offer one Whiteheadian joke: "If you've seen one occasion, you've seen them all." That's what this is all about, in a profound sense as well as a light-hearted sense. The light-heart is another way of expressing what I want this new therapy to be all about--the aim; if not complete, at least part of the completion.

It is my sincere hope that this project has value to those not involved with Whitehead's thought, that it will aid those persons to come closer to this major source, this major vehicle into fundamental essences of reality. We each need our own way, yet Whitehead's seems to be a major one which transcends most others I've encountered and--paradoxically--has moved me closer to my own. This paradox is partially resolved in the understanding that I am appreciating more fully my own experience of God through Whitehead's expression of his vision. What is viewed is far beyond Whitehead's "feeble"[3] account; but what is

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[1] By comparison to the reality of God.

"feeble" is also formidible and freeing. Another way of putting this is that by working my way through Whitehead's system I have been doing my own therapy--or allowing it to emerge. The essence which he expresses transcends his expression. I see this more and more clearly as I make it my own, and begin to see that what I am making mine really was mine anyway. The really *mine* is my experience of this Mind, this Logos, of God; but no one "owns" God, or even the true expression of God's Word. Only God can speak for God--when God chooses, in the way God chooses. And God constantly comes in new forms of expression, at each moment. We must expect the unexpected from unexpected sources. This is God, the Divine Ordering of Reality, the Ultimate Principle behind the process, the One that moves this advance from one experience to the next: God in the World; the World in God.

# Chapter 2

# GESTALT THERAPY: GESTALT FORMATION AND THE MODES OF THE SELF

Gestalt Therapy springs in part from the integration of Gestalt psychology and orthodox psychoanalysis. (For example, see *GT* vii, x).[1] The findings of the former helped transform the latter into a new approach to therapy, even though many of the same elements are retained. Gestalt psychologists discovered that perception is experienced in complete wholes, with a figure of interest and a background of less interest from the perspective of the perceiver. These psychologists found that unfinished situations continue to be disturbing to the subject, so that the subject continues to want to complete the incomplete experience. They demonstrated that the context makes a difference in the perception of the figure; the context is the "ground" for the figure of focal interest. These concepts and their elaboration are important to the theory behind Gestalt Therapy. (*GT* 237-38)

## PART ONE: GESTALT FORMATION

### A. MAJOR CONCEPTS

There are several major concepts that will be discussed in relation to the process of forming a gestalt. These can be grouped as follows: (1) gestalt and contact (including contact-boundary and

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[1] For explanation of abbreviations see p. ix.

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creative adjustment); (2) the self; (3) an introduction to the id and the ego; (4) the several *stages* of contact, and (5) their corresponding figure-ground formulations; and (6) the five *modes* of contact. The last three concepts (4-6) will be integrated fairly tightly in progressive stages within this chapter in anticipation of Chapter 5, though all six are brought together in this chapter.

### 1. *Gestalt and Contact*

One central feature which will be discussed at length in various ways is the process of forming a *gestalt*. Perls defines the term as follows: "A gestalt is a pattern, a configuration, the particular form of organization of the individual parts that go into its make up." (*GA* 3) He notes that there is "no exact English equivalent." (*GA* 3) The process of forming a gestalt is also described in terms of *contact:*

> *Contact, the work that results in assimilation and growth, is the forming of a figure of interest against a ground or context of the organism/environment field.* The figure (gestalt) in awareness is a clear, vivid perception, image, or insight. . . . (*GT* 231)

This process of forming a figure, or gestalt, follows certain stages, and is the experience, means and "place" of relating the organism and the environment.

a. *Contact-boundary.* This location (which in a Whiteheadian view is not a location, but a reification of a process) is sometimes called the *contact-boundary:*

> Experience is ultimately contact, the functioning of the boundary of the organism and its environment. . . . When we say "boundary" we think of a "boundary between"; but the contact-boundary, where

> experience occurs, does not *separate* the organism and its environment; rather it limits the organism, contains and protects it, and *at the same time* it touches the environment. . . . The contact-boundary . . . is essentially *the organ of a particular relation of the organism and the environment*. Primarily . . . this relation is *growth*. (*GT* 229)

(From a Whiteheadian view, one can see the similarity between contact and prehension. The similarity between the process of gestalt formation and of concrescence is also hinted at.)

b. *Creative adjustment*. Besides gestalt formation and contact, this process is described also in terms of *creative adjustment*: *"All contact is creative adjustment of the organism and environment."* (*GT* 230) This is used in part in the sense of "growth" which is the end result of a completed gestalt. The self grows by the gestalt's becoming formed; and the gestalt is formed (completed) by growing through the stages toward the solution. The solution is reached by the self's discovering-creating it. This dual-characteristic process defines the two poles of the self (id and ego) in relationship. This relationship is the mixing of the two--i.e., the middle mode. By means of the middle mode, the gestalt is formed.

c. *Gestalt formation*. An important feature to note: The process of gestalt formation progresses from the field or background to the figure or foreground. The figure is formed out of the contact with the background:

> The process of figure/background formation is a dynamic one in which the urgencies and resources of the field progressively lend their powers to the interest, brightness and force of the dominant figure. (*GT* 231)

This process is characterized by excitement which grows throughout the stages; it is also "feelingful and concernful . . . . There is no indifferent, neutral reality." (*GT* 233)

If the process is interrupted for whatever reason, the unfinished situation remains disturbing and disruptive. The individual experiences anxiety. (*GT* 409) (Whether or not this is a normal or neurotic process depends upon other factors, chiefly whether or not it is infrequent or chronic.) The disruption leads to a "weak gestalt." That is,

> When the figure is dull, confused, graceless, lacking in energy (a "weak gestalt"), we may be sure that there is a lack of contact, something in the environment is blocked out, some vital organic need is not being expressed; the person is not "all there," that is, his whole field cannot lend its urgency and resources to the completion of the figure. (*GT* 232)

Another, broader way to view this is that it is the activity of the "organizing self" (*GT* 409) in process of forming a gestalt which is thwarted.

### 2. *The Self*

What is the nature of this "self"? The *self* is "the system of contacts at any moment," "the integrator." (*GT* 235; cf. also 367, 373) It is "the contact-boundary at work," "forming figures and grounds," and "finding and making the meanings that we grow by." (*GT* 235) The self is not fixed; it "is flexibly various, for *it varies with the dominant organic needs and the pressing environmental stimuli*. . . ." (*GT* 235 emphasis added. Cf., also 373)

The self also is defined as the "system of creative adjustments." (*GT* 247) In its activity, "it is aware and orients, aggresses and manipulates, and feels emotionally the appropriateness of environment and organism." (*GT* 373) In acting upon the environment and the organism, following the excitation by a novelty (say, an appetite from within or a stimulus from the environment), the *"self dissolves the given* (of both the environment and the body and its habits) *into possibilities and from them creates a reality."* (*GT* 404-405. Emphasis added.) This given, the ground, is the source of the new gestalt as it comes into being.

In addition to these activities, the self has certain qualities:

> Self is spontaneous, middle in mode (as the ground of action and passion), and engaged with its situation (as I, You, and It). (*GT* 376)
>
> The spontaneous is both active and passive, both willing and done to; or better, it is middle in mode, a creative impartiality; a disinterest not in the sense of being not excited or not creative, for spontaneity is eminently these, but as the unity prior (and posterior) to activity and passivity, containing both. . . . The extremes of spontaneity are . . . deliberateness and . . . relaxation. (*GT* 376)

These extremes of spontaneity (relaxation--deliberateness) come into play at different stages in the development of the gestalt. They are the properties of two "alternate structures of the self," (*GT* 243) the id and the ego.

### 3. *The Id and the Ego*

The id is "an extreme of relaxation and loose association," whereas the ego is "an extreme of deliberate organization for the purpose of identification . . . ." (*GT* 243)

a. *The id*. A summary of this pole of the self is as follows: This mode

> is the given background dissolving into its possibilities, including organic excitations and past unfinished situations becoming

> aware, and the environment vaguely perceived, and the inchoate feelings connecting organism and environment. (*GT* 378)

b. *The ego*. By contrast, this mode

> is the progressive identification with and alienation of the possibilities, the limiting and heightening of the on-going contact, including motor behavior, aggressing, orientation, and manipulation. (*GT* 378)

c. *Ego functions "follow" id functions*. Following acceptance of the impulse, there is a spontaneous dominance of a given figure, and,

> certain images brighten and motor responses are initiated. At this point, most often, there are also required certain deliberate exclusions and choices (as well as the spontaneous dominances where possible rival concerns subsided of themselves). It is necessary to pay attention as well as to be attentive . . . . (*GT* 378)

> The id-function more and more becomes ego-function up to the point of final contact and release, just the opposite of what Miss Freud asserts. (*GT* 385)

At the end of the process of gestalt formation, "the deliberateness is relaxed and the *satisfaction* is again spontaneous." (*GT* 379; emphasis added.)

## B. GESTALT FORMATION AS STAGES OF CONTACT

The contact stages which form this process of gestalt formation are: fore-contact, contact, final contact, and post-contact. These will be discussed in order. The numbering, however, will be slightly different in order to be consistent throughout the dissertation (the order of the contact stages will be the same as above, though).

### 1. *Fore-contact*

In this first stage, the organism is in a stage of "creative indifference," (*EHA* 19) able to respond to the full potential of the situation. The state of creative indifference is not disinterest; rather it is "full of interest," (*EHA* 19) though undifferentiated or unactualized. This is that state of awareness of "the 'given' or Id of the situation . . . ." (*GT* 403) "The body is the ground, the appetite or environmental stimulus is the figure." (*GT* 403) In this state, the "given" dissolves "into its possibilities." (*GT* 403) Among other things, this state is characterized by *acceptance*. (See, for example, *GT* 245 and 376.) One accepts what is, what one finds or contacts. One accepts the impulse, even though not yet acting upon it.

### 2. *First Sub-stage of Contact*

The second stage is divided by Perls into two sub-stages. In the *first sub-stage*, "the excitement of appetite becomes ground and some 'object' or set of possibilities is the figure." (*GT* 403) Awareness of the appetite is the result of the acceptance of the impulse, and is either the result of environmental stimulation or an inner need, according to Perls. (*GT* 404) It should be understood that appetite and environmental stimulus are variations of the same process: the environment could not stimulate "unless the organism were set to respond . . ."; often, in fact, "the response reaches out to the stimulus." (*GT* 404)

"Appetite" would seem to be another term for the need felt by the organism, whether it is the result of an imbalance (deprivation or surfeit) imposed from "within" the body or an imbalance imposed from "without" (imposed upon the self in both cases). Thus, in this first sub-stage of contact proper, it is the excitement of this need (the energy of the impulse) that becomes ground. "The body diminishes. (Or contrariwise, in pain, the body becomes figure.)" (*GT* 403)

At this sub-stage there is, in addition, "an emotion." (*GT* 403) "Emotions are the integrative awareness of a relation between the organism and the environment." (*GT* 407) Emotions are not simply an awareness of this relationship, but are "the way we become aware of the appropriateness of our concerns: the way the world is for us." (*GT* 409) They are the "means of cognition," (*GT* 409) though as such they may be fallible if we are mistaken about the way the world actually is in relationship with us at that moment. Even though potentially fallible, however, they should not (and ultimately cannot) be dismissed or ignored. The correct procedure is to see "whether they can develop into the more settled feelings accompanying deliberate orientation--e.g., to proceed from the enthusiasm of discovery to conviction, or lust to love." (*GT* 409) Emotions spring from the original impulse, from the original "urges and appetites," (*GT* 408) taking over their original motivational force. Emotions in turn give way to feelings, "the actualized virtues and vices (e.g., courageousness, sullenness, determination, etc.) that impel more complicated orientations and manipulations, especially when they are deliberate." (*GT* 408)

Emotions, then, are the mid-point between the initial impulse or urge and the deliberate activities. Note that the urge-emotion-feeling continuum is characterized by a shift from the relatively crude, vague, indefinite, to the refined, clear, definite; with a corresponding increase in strength or intensity through refinement. Note further the shift from the experience of being "pushed" (urged) to the more refined and complex phase. Finally, note that emotions (in their orientational sense) are not themselves right or wrong; they follow the full perception. In that context, though, they can be judged as accurate or not as the perception of the world is accurate or not.

Based upon the choice of words in the text, it would appear that there has been a shift to at least some of the ego-style functions in this the first sub-phase of contact. The description is blurred enough, though, that this shift may not be easy to detect. Later this will be separated out a bit, and some sharper distinctions made among these descriptive features.

### 3. *Second Sub-stage of Contact*

The second sub-stage of actual contact clearly is dominated by ego functions acting upon the (now) ground of possibilities through "deliberate orientation and manipulation." (*GT* 403) There is "choosing and rejecting of possibilities," (*GT* 403) which is the same as action upon what has been delivered up by the id functions. The general style is now *engagement* instead of acceptance. "Engagement" actually is inclusive of the first sub-stage's functions. This can be understood by seeing that "engagement" is a general term that covers the functions of aggression, orientation, and so forth, that occur during the experimentation with the "set of possibilities." This last comes from the first sub-phase. "These are the identifications and alienations of the Ego." (*GT* 403)

The excitement or energy involved with both sub-phases of contact; as well as the basic data of the given; and the set of possibilities concerning the given; and the purpose of the gestalt (or its aim--at solving the need)--*all would seem to be provided by what has been accepted in the first place.* In other words, *the id mode may be seen as the "source" or ground for what the ego mode* (as it grows in complexity or intensity in the full stage of contact) *is dealing with*--as possibilities and as the experimentation with these possibilities in order to find the solution. It would seem quite reasonable that loss of contact with the fertile source--the id mode and its offerings--would lead to de-energized, graceless, weak, dull, meaningless experience and activity.

### 4. *Final Contact*

This stage involves the spontaneous rush toward completion of the gestalt: "The lively goal is the figure and is in touch." (*GT* 403) The means of satisfying the appetite is now in clear awareness, obviously has been created and well-defined at this point. In addition, it is approachable, and is approached, all in a "unitary action": "All deliberateness is relaxed and there is a spontaneous unitary action of perception, motion, and feeling. The awareness is at its brightest, in the figure of the You." (*GT* 403) The background, now, is depleted of its energy. There is no more concern left in the background of environment and body. Instead, the concern or excitement is completely given over to the figure. "Momentarily, there is practically no background" because "the self is immediately and fully engaged in the *figure* it has discovered-and-invented." (*GT* 416) The potential is now actualized, "so the self becomes something (but in so doing it ceases to be self)." (*GT* 416) The process has reached its climax, its point of full satisfaction (in the ideal at least).

This stage of gestalt formation is described by Perls as the middle mode stance. The self "has been not merely an active-artificer of the solution, nor a passive-artifact of it . . . but it has more and more been assuming a middle mode and growing into the solution." (*GT* 416)

> It is in considering the aftermaths of contact, the assimilations and identifications, that one can most appreciate the importance of the middle mode of spontaneity. For if the self had been merely active, it could not become also that other, it would merely project; if it were merely passive, *it* could not have grown, it would have suffered an introjection. (*GT* 421-22)

The self has had to function in both the id and the ego modes in order to complete this process. This *is* the middle mode.

### 5. *Post-contact*

The final stage is *Post-contact*, which is essentially the resolution following the climax of satisfaction. It is a return to healthy confluence, to a state of creative indifference. "There is a flowing organism/environment interaction that is not a figure/background: the self diminishes." (*GT* 404) The result of the contact process is "accomplished growth," something which is "unaware." (*GT* 421)

### *Integration of Contact Stages and the Figure-Ground Forms*

The following is an attempt to refine and summarize some of the dynamics set forth above. Of particular focus are the *stages of contact*

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and the *figure-ground formulations*. This also is an attempt to prepare the way to the next section dealing with modes of contact, as well as the more explicit integration of this portion of Gestalt Therapy with (1) the therapy's theory of self modes and (2) Whitehead's theory of concrescence and perception.

1) *Fore-contact*. In this initial stage, two of the primary characteristics are creative indifference toward and acceptance of the given. In this stage, one is in contact with or experiences the total given, which *begins to disolve or differentiate into its possibilities* (as well as the need). The *body* (a special portion of the *given*) is the *ground,* and the appetite or stimulus (i.e., *excitement*) is the *figure*. Experience of the given, in a sense, leads to experience of the need (as part of the given). This need, in general terms, can be seen as the most interesting, intense, or relevant excitement out of all available in the given. This is true whether it is provoked from within the organism or from without. (It is likely of greatest interest or relevance from the perspective of the self.) Therefore it is possible to say that *experience of the given leads to experience of the most intense portion of the given--the excitement. This same general experience also begins to lead to awareness of the possibilities inherent in the given as they are relevant to the most acute excitement.* (There is no "action" at this stage.)

2) *First sub-stage of contact*. In this stage there is a characteristic of a growing excitement and acceptance of the need (differentiated from the total given). One begins by experiencing the appetite (i.e.,

need or excitement) and more fully experiencing the set of relevant possibilities for meeting this need. The former figure, the *excitement* or need, becomes the *ground*. The *set of possibilities* inherent in the given becomes, now, the *figure*. *Experience of the need or the excitement has been transformed into the experience of the set of possibilities; this set of possibilities becomes more focused and therefore capable of being tested or experimented with as potential solutions for the need.* (There is still no "action.")

3) *Second sub-stage of contact*. In this stage there is now "activity" to realize the possibilities to meet the need in the present (here-and-now) context. Need and possibilities are more closely joined. There is the characteristic of engagement, as well as of manipulation and orientation. One senses the relevant possibilities and is working to realize them. There is active experimentation with the possibilities in relationship to the peak excitement (or need). The *set of possibilities* in this sense becomes the *ground*, and the *experimentation* with the possible goals becomes the *figure*. *In a sense, the experience of the need plus the possibility is the figure*. (Perls is not clear on the figure in this case.) *Feeling the set of possibilities becomes transformed into a greater emphasis on working to realize them, moving the organism closer to the goal.*

4) *Final contact*. In this stage (3), there is a characteristic of a rush toward completion, toward full contact with the best solution of the need. Becoming moves toward ending. One is most strongly aware of the goal (best solution), and most strongly aware of the self--just

prior to and in anticipation of making full contact with the goal and dissolution of the self in this relationship. The *ground* becomes *depleted* as the set of possibilities is used up or fully realized; and one is left only with the *goal* (means of solution) as the *figure*. The *awareness of the experimentation with the set of possibilities to meet the need has been transformed now into awareness of the goal, which leads the organism toward full contact with the goal and therefore the resolution of the need.*

5) *Post-contact.* In this stage there is no longer any awareness, for the goal has been reached and the need has been satisfied, the struggle has been resolved. The experimentation is finished, the self in this relationship with the given exists no longer; it has perished. The peak of excitement has passed. In this sense, *all (the given) is ground* and there is *no figure. Awareness of the goal has been transformed into no awareness; this paves the way for all of the given to be ground, and therefore for a new excitement to emerge from the given* (depending upon organismic need and environmental stimulation, as well as the new self).

*Summary for stages and figure-ground.* Each stage emerges from the preceding stage, and in a sense what has been ground becomes figure. Awareness of the figure in one stage leads to this figure becoming the next ground, and paves the way for the next figure. Each figure in this sense is a refinement out of the last figure. When one realizes that what is total ground is also, in a sense, total figure, then one can see the description of the process as generally fitting each stage as it moves to or becomes the next stage.

*Summary for self modes.* In terms of *self modes*, one can see (in general terms) the movement from the id mode to the ego mode and back again. There is a movement from the vague and all pervasive general to the highly focused and exclusive specific--and back again. This parallels Whitehead's description of both concrescence and perception: from the conformal stage through intermediate to the comparative stage, then on the conformal stage of the next occasion; from causal efficacy to presentational immediacy to symbolic reference, then on to causal efficacy for the next moment; from the many to the one, then to the one among the many; from the publicity of the universe to the privacy of subjectivity, back to the publicity of objectivity.

### *Conclusion for Gestalt Formation as Contact Stages*

Each ending is truly an ending, a finishing, a lonely goodby. Once that is *fully* complete, then there is the potential to say a new hello. It is easy to skip over that ending process, that acute pain that we all must face, not only at the end of life, but at important stages throughout life. Being on the cross is being in pain, totally alone. One can accept no real support, not that it is not wanted. This is truly a *can not*. All support must vanish as the door of the old house is closed and the goodbys are said. The past is there in memory, available in that sense, but it is not present. It is no wonder, as Latner points out, that the final stage of contact formation (characterized by "egotism") is *the* all-pervasive interruption. (*TGTB* 136)

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We so often do not reach our goals because it means facing the pain of the awful loneliness at the moment we close the door and say goodby, then turn to leave, never to return to the same house again. We can never live there again, no matter how beautifully or how tragically we experienced that moment of living.

## C. GESTALT FORMATION AND MODES OF CONTACT

One theme which extends from the early writings in Gestalt Therapy to later works are the various *contact functions*. These are described as "characteristics of contact," (*TGTB* 83) "mechanisms of meeting boundary disturbances," (*GA* 30) interruptions of contact functions, (*GT* 450-51; also, entire chapter, 447-66) and so on.

### 1. *Problems of Consistency and Perspective*

The perspective on contact in these terms is not well-worked out, and it would be valuable to do this. This task, however, will not be done here, for this is a major undertaking. Let me simply summarize some of the apparent problems. These are illustrated when one compares *Gestalt Therapy* with *The Gestalt Therapy Book*. The former and earlier work discusses what I am calling "modes of contact" more distinctly in terms of (1) a process of *interruption* of contact (with several kinds of interruptions); (2) a process which is therefore largely seen as *unhealthy* or neurotic;[2] and (3) a process that has five variations

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[2] The healthy side of these modes is discussed. On confluence, as an example, see the first half of the book, *GT* 118ff. Confluence is healthy after completion of the gestalt, unhealthy only if it prevents formation of the gestalt.

(confluence, introjection, projection, retroflection, and egotism) that roughly correspond to the stages of gestalt formation: "before the new primary excitation," "during the excitation," "confronting the environment," during "conflict and destroying," and "at final contact." (*GT* 451) (This will be discussed more explicitly in terms of the stages of contact at the end of this section.)

The latter work (*TGTB* 83-87, 131-36) describes these contact modes (1) as *the* various characteristics of contact, with a diminished sense that there is a pure mode of contact (implied in the former work) which can be interrupted; (2) as "characteristic ways" of making contact which are more capable of being seen as equally balanced between healthy and unhealthy; (3) as involving primarily only *four* variations: confluence, projection, introjection and retroflection. One can also see that, in addition to obscuring (though not eliminating) the concept of egotism[3] (*TGTB* 136-37) as a contact function, *the ordering of the modes of contact is different*. Perls, *et. al.,* tie these various modes to the stages of contact or gestalt formation. This is fairly naturally done since they are seen as interruptions of this process. Latner orders them according to the self modes, but I am not at all certain that his ordering is more logical or reasonable, even given his different criterion for organization. This will be discussed in Chapter 5 in the context of modes of contact and prehension (and other relevant terms).

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[3] Egotism *is* discussed, but it is handled in such a way that its role as a contact function equal to the others (as a category) is obscured.

### 2. *Modes of Contact*

To summarize the definition of these modes of contact: (See *TGTB* 83-87, 131-137)

a. *Confluence*. In essence this mode is the "appreciation of sameness," (*TGTB* 83) or an inability (inherently neither good nor bad) to distinguish between self and other. There is no "boundary" between self and other; everything flows together. In health, this is an ability to be one with, to merge with (say, another person). In dis-ease, this dynamic interferes with any further contact; the person stays confluent when other contact modes are needed. For a couple, this might mean that the husband and the wife have a difficult time distinguishing where one leaves off and the other begins. Qualities or feelings or actions belonging to one are incorrectly seen as belonging to the other. The use of "we" can be a sign of confluence. When you and I (=we) do not happen to be the same, this can cause problems. Confluence can also be behind a feeling of being in danger of invasion by another (say, by a parent); no "boundary," no limits--therefore, protection is lacking.

b. *Introjection*. This mode is, in essence, swallowing whole, a taking in without de-structuring. In health, this is a stage of learning, for example. In dis-ease, this results in carrying around chunks of undigested material which are never tampered with, never de-structured and assimilated or discarded. One must take the food in whole, whether food for the body or food as ideas before one can deal with it. If a person, however, swallows whole attitudes and never critically examines them, then the person remains with self-other orientations that may not fit them in *their* actual world.

c. *Projection*. In essence this mode is taking a dynamic of the self (a feeling, attitude, an introject, and so on) and assigning it to the outside world. In health, this can be an aspect of creative imagination as well as identification. One can imaginatively consider a possibility for a given situation (an imaginative proposition, for example). The fantasy was created within, but it is temporarily assigned to the outside. One may consider painting a wall a different color and project this color (known in one's imagination) onto the wall of the room. In health, however, there is clarity that this is not the actual color of the room. One can also assign one's own feelings to another. When one has suffered a loss it is possible to project the same feelings onto another person who has also suffered (perhaps the same) loss. In dis-ease, this is done with no potential appriciation of the distinction between what is fantasy and what is real. The person rejects any feedback that they may be wrong: the room "really" is this other color (in an hallucination, for example); or, this other person "really" does feel a certain way--even if they do not. (My anger is yours; my critic really seems to come from you.)

d. *Retroflection*. This mode involves turning an outwardly-directed attitude, impulse, or action back onto one's self while one is "fully engaged." (*GT* 455) In health this might be seen as discipline. Learning to play a musical instrument or writing a dissertation requires this dynamic; so does general impulse control (not murdering another person who has made you feel quite hurt or endangered, for example). In dis-ease, this is continued manipulation of the self when one really needs to attempt manipulation of the environment. This can be seen in terms of over-control, excessive orientation, rigidity, and so on; and a diminished capacity to let go, to be playful, concluding; for being an *effective* or *purposive* agent in general.

e. *Egotism.* This mode is the dynamic of seeing oneself as capable and powerful--as the center of one's universe. In health, this means taking responsibility, taking charge, utilizing one's powers or talents without shame or fear. In dis-ease, this involves over-emphasizing one's power, making oneself exclusively the center of the universe without regard to the reality of others' needs and rights, and without regards to the limits of one's powers. In health, one holds fast to the sense of who one is (identity) and what one wants to do. In dis-ease, this is holding on when one needs to let go in order to go beyond the present situation, to let in others, to stop isolating oneself. This can be expressed by constantly interrupting the conclusion of any process for fear that one's self will also conclude.

### 3. *"Modes" of Contact and "Stages" of Contact*

As mentioned above, these five *modes* of contact are involved, both in healthy and unhealthy ways, with the different *stages* of contact leading to the formation of a gestalt. The stages have already been integrated with the forms of figure and ground. The latter clearly changes in correspondence with each change in a stage. The relationship between the *stages* and *modes* is not as precise or simple. The first contact stage and the last (in this case, final contact, not post-contact) are clearly confluence and egotism, respectively. However, the ones in between are not as easily or as clearly correlated with the modes of contact. For one thing, there are three modes of contact to be correlated with but one contact stage (Stage 2, Contact); and even this actually is not correct. The whole relationship between the modes and stages of contact needs some integration particularly so that they may be further integrated with succeeding dynamics here and in Chapter 5.

a. *Confluence*. As stated, this mode is clearly related to the first contact stage, *fore-contact*. Confluence is characterized by an appreciation of sameness. This contact stage actually involves *creative indifference as well as acceptance*. Perls tends to make the same distinction, that is, as Whitehead does in distinguishing between *initial data* and *objective datum*. These are sub-phases of the first phase of concrescence. The *initial data* are *all the given* whereas the *objective datum is that* aspect of the given which is *actually accepted* (i.e., objectified). If *confluence* is seen as simply *creative indifference,* then the interruption which occurs in dis-ease would be prior to any really selective acceptance or incorporation. This appears to be the case. If so, this means that the *contact stage of fore-contact* can be seen in *two sub-stages*, and that *confluence as a mode of contact is* the counterpart of *creative indifference* (and also of the *initial data*). Thus, *confluence as a contact function occurs during the first sub-phase of fore-contact.*

b. *Introjection.* This mode, then, *would reasonably be seen as involving the other aspect (or sub-stage) of fore-contact, that aspect which is characterized by the kind of acceptance that corresponds to Whitehead's notion of objective datum.* This is where there is the *beginning of selectivity*; not everything is chosen for inclusion or consideration. This also involves a general appreciation or valuation of the relevance of possibilities inherent in what has been accepted, even if one does not yet become aware of what one has accepted. (This is spelled out more fully in the material on Whitehead.) There is still the general sense of accepting what is, though there is beginning to be some selectivity for what is positively included. One takes something in; this is prior to more fully dealing with it in terms of actual contact.

c. *Projection.* This mode *would be connected with the first sub-stage of contact proper.* Perls speaks of "confronting the environment"; in this case, this is the beginning of a focus on the "set of possibilities" in the "data" accepted by means of introjection to meet the need, to resolve the excitement which began to emerge from the initially undifferentiated given. Projection has a sense of both imaginative and realistic possibilities being tested against the actual world in conjunction with the need to be met.

d. *Retroflection.* The fourth mode *would therefore be tied to the second sub-phase of contact.* Here there is an *active experimentation* with the possible solutions, which includes a restraining of and a refining of the initial impulse until one reaches more clearly the fitting solution. One is aware of the relevant possibilities and is actively working to realize them through "conflict" with and "destructuring" of the given. One is "fully engaged" during retroflection, which is characteristic of the second sub-phase of contact.

e. *Egotism.* This leaves *egotism as the characteristic of the stage of final contact*, the clear outcome of retroflected experimentation. In this stage the self is on the brink of making full contact with the most relevant possibility which can resolve the excitement or meet the need. This is the goal which is finally being reached or realized. The self at this stage is fully realized in relationship to its need and the means of meeting this need. This union is what it has been aiming at from the beginning of the process of gestalt (self) formation. The self has been working to bring these two features together--itself which (a) is *defined by* this need and (b) *defines itself* by creating the means of satisfying this need. At this stage the self's full power is actualized or most intensely experienced with the real qualification of its present setting. At the point that it satisfies this need, the self in this relationship will perish. The relationship will exist no longer for the need will exist no longer, and therefore the self as defined by this relationship (between need and goal) will also cease. This is the climax of the particular moment (or series of moments).

### 4. *Integration of Modes and Stages with the Figure-Ground Forms*

The immediately preceding material on contact modes needs to be summarized and integrated with the progression of figure-ground formulations. As well, it needs to be set in a form consistent with the last major integration. This will aid in further integrations as well (hopefully) as in greater clarity. The summary will be ordered by the stages, which have been refined by the modes.

a. *Fore-contact*. Fore-contact comes in two sub-stages.

A. The first is characterized by the mode of confluence, and is associated with being "creatively indifferent" to the entire given. This is openness to all, feeling all, which means that there is no outstanding feature. For the moment, *all is undifferentiated*, and in that sense, *ground*. Feeling the most intense stimulus, whether within or without, comes by virtue of confluence, and leads to:

B. The second sub-stage is characterized by the "taking in" process, termed introjection. This process is the vague acceptance of the given, including the excitement, within the organism. There is some selectivity and some organization at this stage, for not all is taken in, and *the most intense excitement* (or stimulus) stands out as the *initial figure*. There is only one dominant need at a time against a *background of the accepted given*.

b. *Projective contact*. In Gestalt Therapy, this is described as the first sub-stage of the single stage of contact. The mode of making contact is by projection, where an aspect of the introjected given is destructured enough to come to the *fore* as the *set of possibilities* for meeting the initial need (or resolving the initial excitement). The *need or excitement* is more clearly the guide or the *ground* for the whole process, which now centers on matching possibilities against the need. This *projective process is the figure (the need is the ground).*

c. *Retroflective contact.* This is the second sub-phase of contact. This stage is characterized by retroflection, by an active experimentation with the set of possibilities developed or appreciated in the prior stage. The *experimentation*, which is the *figure*, is done with the *set of possibilities,* which is the *ground*. The style of experimentation is one of increasingly moving toward the discovery and creation of the best solution, and involves at this stage a holding back of the full response. In a sense, this holding back involves a turning back of the impulse to act onto the self to further intensify the potential for the best solution, and to mobilize one's energy for the final rush toward the goal in the next stage.

d. *Final contact.* This stage is characterized by the fullest or most intense response toward the best possible solution to the need (or resolution of the excitement brought in to awareness initially as the most dominant stimulus). The goal is clearly in sight, and virtually dominates one's awareness; *in a sense, there is only figure* (solution), for the set of possibilities has been exhausted by the experimentation of the last stage. The ground, in other words, has been depleted in relation to this gestalt's goal or aim: resolution of the excitement of this specific need. When the goal is reached, the self is at its peak of intensity; this is egotism. When the need is met, the self as organized around this particular excitement dissolves, giving way to the next stage. As the self reaches its solution, there may be an "explosive" rush with a powerful feeling attached.

e. *Post-contact.* In one sense, there is *no figure,* for the solution has been reached and the excitement resolved. The process of gestalt formation is now concluded. Yet this brings the self to the stage of openness (the opposite of the last, final contact stage); and this total openness is actually confluence. All is undifferentiated again, and in that sense, all is ground. The process of formation is ready to begin anew, with the next stimulus emerging out of the given; the next need in the hierarchy arises. There is, though, at this stage a loss of awareness, a sense of the self's perishing (for the self had been organized around its need and its solution to the need; this organization is obviously ended).

*Final essence.* To boil this down even further:

1. Fore-contact:
    a. Confluence: all ground.
    b. Introjection: need is figure, accepted given is ground.
2. Projective contact: set of possibilities is figure, need is ground.
3. Retroflective contact: experimentation is figure, set of possibilities is ground.
4. Final contact, egotism: solution or goal is figure, experimentation is ground.
5. Post-contact: confluent with total given as ground.

### 5. *Health and Dis-ease*

As may be noted, this discussion did not include an explication of health as opposed to dis-ease. The discussion was oriented more toward the idealized or formal dynamics involved. As such, these

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dynamics can be used for good or evil with respect to the self's needs and potential, as well as the environment's needs and future potential. *The key to health or dis-ease seems to be the degree of flexibility needed to move from the needed contact stage; and these "shifts" seem to build upon the modes of contact:* It is by means of confluence, for example, that one can allow the specific need to emerge from the total given; it is by means of introjection that the given can be "taken in" so that it may be felt experimentally in the context of the need and what the environment has or might have to offer; and once the possibilities have been more thoroughly sorted out by projection, then the discovering-creating process of retroflection can be carried out; leading to the final, most possible (in this setting) solution--the self at its full power or egotism; once the solution has been reached, the way is paved for the next need or excitement to emerge from the given--to which the self is fully open because the last pressing need has been taken care of, does not interfere with the next need or experience. It should be clear that if needs are allowed to accumulate, they begin to be constantly demanding, and mutually interfering. They begin to appear to be all the same; the ability to discriminate or experience which is the most pressing would disappear, for the sheer number would in itself be a demand coming from everywhere (and nowhere) at once. Self-regulation would disappear.

## PART TWO: MODES OF THE SELF

The next major step will be to examine more closely the modes of the self. Included in this second part of the chapter will be a more detailed description of the dynamics for each mode. The first section of this part will focus ~~on~~ the original formulation of the self modes in *Gestalt Therapy*. The second section of this part will explore subsequent formulations in more recent works. This latter step is necessary because the specific labels (id, ego, middle) are dropped in later works, yet the formal dynamics continue to be influential if not as clearly visible. This latter consideration also allows the general discussion to be tied to other themes important to Gestalt Therapy: the definition of the neurotic, including issues of self-support and self-regulation; and the concept of awareness, including its role in health and therapy. There is also some preliminary discussion of Whiteheadian categories in this section.

## A. ORIGINAL FORMULATION

As stated, this section will be devoted to a relatively detailed summary of the original exposition of the self modes. The descriptions follow the text fairly closely, necessitating considerable use of quotations.

### 1. *The Id Mode of the Self*

One of the important keys to the id mode is the *attitude of* acceptance. (*GT* 245, 376) If there were only one word to describe this state, it would be that. What is accepted? The "unchanging given," (*GT* 375) which is accepted "without engagement":

> Desirous of resting, the self is not going to rally and act out the impulse; motor initiation is completely inhibited. One after another momentary signals assume dominance and lapse, for they are not further contacted. (*GT* 381)

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The signals, or impulses (*GT* 342), come and go, but are not held onto or restructured. This seems to emerge most clearly in a state of relaxation, in contrast with the state of deliberateness of the ego mode:

> [For Freud,] the "id" and the "ego" are not seen as alternate structures of the self differing in degree--the one an extreme of relaxation and loose association, the other an extreme of deliberate organization for the purpose of identification--yet this picture is given at every moment of pyschotherapy. (*GT* 243; cf. 381)

This state of extreme acceptance can only be maintained by a self which "suspends sensory readiness and loosens the muscles from the middle tone." (*GT* 381) This results in a "sense of passivity," (*GT* 381) of being attentive instead of paying attention. (*GT* 378)

What is this "given"? The given is the background, "including organic excitations and past unfinished situations . . . and the environment . . . ." (*GT* 378) The body plays a large role: "The body looms large because, sense and motion suspended, the proprioceptions usurp the field." (*GT* 381; cf. 403, 405) Included with the body are "its habits." (*GT* 405)

How is the given perceived? It is perceived "vaguely," with "inchoate feelings connecting organism and environment." (*GT* 478) What is felt in the contact with the background? The possibilities:

> At the very instant of concentration, the unchanging given is dissolving into many possibilities and is seen to be a potentiality. (*GT* 375)

> The Id is the given background dissolving into its possibilities . . . . (*GT* 378; cf. 381, 403)

What is the organization of its content like? The organization is one of "loose association," (*GT* 243) "scattered and irrational; its contents are hallucinatory . . . ." (*GT* 381)

In the id mode, then, the self accepts or receives the given without in any way acting upon it. This is seen most clearly perhaps in either a state of aware relaxation or a dream state. In this mode, the self accepts the background with which it is presented and does not move to make any changes. The background or given includes the body which, along with its proprioceptive signals, looms large. The given also includes the environment. The self vaguely perceives this given and feels connected with it by means of inchoate or incompletely developed feelings. Urges arise from the background and demand attention. These receive attention; the self in this mode, however, does not act upon these demands. The self is disengaged from motoric responsiveness and, in that sense, is passive. The urges which arise are allowed to assume a spontaneous dominance, and the self feels the potentiality, the many possibilities, to be found in the given. The potentiality, which highly organized and actualized, will provide the source for the resolution of the demand imposed by the impulse. Now, however, only the potentiality is experienced. The contents of this experience (associations) are not tightly organized but loose and scattered, and can appear to be irrational or hallucinatory.

### 2. *The Ego Mode of the Self*

One way to approach the ego mode of the self is through its quality of *engagement*.

> By "engaged with the situation," we mean that there is no sense of oneself or of other things other than one's experience of the situation. The feeling is immediate, concrete, and present and integrally involves perception, muscularity, and excitation. (*GT* 377)

Being engaged also means taking an active role in the de-structuring and re-structuring of what is given. The self takes apart the old in order to create the new. The possibilities inherent in the unchanging given "are reformed into a new figure emerging from the ground of potentiality . . . ." (*GT* 375; cf. 379, 411) This involves making deliberate choices to include and exclude features of the old. (*GT* 378; cf. 447) This is also referred to as identifications and alienations. The ego mode, in fact, is sometimes referred to as the "system of identifications and alienations" (*GT* 235; cf. 379) or the process of "the progressive identification with and alienation of the possibilities . . . ." (*GT* 378) This process of identification and alienation is the self creating itself out of the potential. In this sense, it is self-caused. It determines its own final nature, which in Gestalt Therapy is sometimes referred to as determining its own "boundary." (cf. *GT* 411)

What is the self's style and experience in this mode? In summary, "it is deliberate, active in mode, sensorically alert and motorically aggressive, and conscious of itself as isolated from its situation." (*GT* 379) It senses itself as "*doing* the experiencing, . . . and seems from this center to be an extrinsic agent in the field." (*GT* 379) It takes an aggressive stance to encounter the field and take it apart. This also means doing something *to* something else, an "object," (*GT* 391) which is other than the self. Thus, the sense of being isolated or separate from an "external world." (*GT* 380)

The self in the ego mode is also quite evidently goal-directed. The "organic need is restricted to the goal," (*GT* 380) which requires a "tight abstract unity . . . ." (*GT* 381) There is, in fact, a "high degree of abstraction" associated with this mode, abstraction both "from the perceptive-motoric-affective unity and from the total field." (*GT* 379) Perls defines abstraction as "a fixing of certain parts in order that other parts may move and be foreground." (*GT* 379) This is certainly a highly active process, involving a great deal of control of perception (*GT* 380) in order to reach the goal. In this mode there is also a diminished sense of the body, with one exception. If there is a bodily pain, the painful locus becomes the figure. (*GT* 403) Finally, the associations in this mode are additive (*GT* 397) and highly organized. (*GT* 243)

In summary: In the ego mode, the self engages and restructures the given in order to resolve the demand imposed by the urge or impulse from the background (or given). In this engagement, the self is active and aggressive, alert and deliberate. Perception is more controlled, and the background (including the body) becomes diminished in importance. *The restructuring necessarily involves de-structuring.* The old, the past, must be taken apart in order to create the new. The new figure is created by a process of identification and alienation. The self includes some elements and excludes others. The self makes choices. To do this, it must pay attention, instead of being attentive. In acting upon the given, the self treats the given as external to itself. Its self-awareness includes a sense of being isolated or separate from the scene. The content of its experience has a great deal of organization, and its associations are additive.

### 3. *The Middle Mode of the Self*

The self in the middle mode is characterized by *spontaneity*.

Spontaneity, as previously discussed, has two poles. One pole is accepting, passive, done to, relaxed in its extreme; the other pole is engaged, active, doing to, deliberate in its extreme. The self in the middle mode combines these poles, and grows toward the solution.

> Spontaneity is the feeling of acting [sic] the organism/environment that is going on, being not merely its artisan nor its artifact, but growing in it. Spontaneity is not directive nor self-directive, nor is it being carried along though essentially disengaged, but it is a discovering-and-inventing as one goes along, engaged and accepting. (*GT* 376)

For Perls, *et. al.*, the activity of the artist and children exemplify the middle mode stance.

> The artist . . . is not unconscious in his working, but neither is he mainly deliberately calculating. His awareness is a kind of middle mode, neither active nor passive, but accepting the conditions, attending to the job, and *growing* toward the solution. And just so with children . . . . (*GT* 245)

Children and artists function in this mode; what about adults? Perls asks. "Can the same middle mode of acceptance and growth operate in adult life in more 'serious' concerns? We believe so." (*GT* 246)

Persons functioning in the middle mode do their most "valuable work." (*GT* 246) "It is precisely in favorable circumstances, when the id and the ego are in harmony, that the creative work of awareness is most manifest, not 'out of the picture.'" (*GT* 385) The deliberate, controlling, goal-directed mode does not dominate or rule. Instead, distractions also are accepted "as possible attractions," (*GT* 381) allowing a necessary flexibility in the discovery-and-invention of the solution to the problem.

Being in this mode makes possible the process of organic self-regulation where the most pressing need assumes dominance:

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> Each most pressing unfinished situation assumes dominance and mobilizes all the available effort until the task is completed; then it becomes indifferent and loses consciousness, and the next pressing need claims attention. The need becomes pressing not deliberately but spontaneously. Deliberateness, selection, planning are involved in completing the unfinished situation, but conscious [sic] does not have to find the problem, rather it is identical with the problem. The spontaneous consciousness of the dominant need and its organization of the functions of contact is the psychological form of *organismic-self-regulation*. (*GT* 274)

If the person's ability to stay in the middle mode is somehow impaired, their ability to be aware of their most pressing need, let alone the means of solution, will be lost.

The ego and id modes must work together for health. For example, the ego mode can aid by deliberately controlling and partially or completely withholding the response of the organism to allow for the free play of the senses (the id mode).

> The advantages of the looser connection [between motoric-muscular and sensoric-thought nerve centers] in man are, of course, enormous: the ability to survey, hold back, cogitate, in brief to be deliberate and muscularly hold back the body while letting the senses and thoughts play, along with immediately spontaneously moving in smaller motions of the eyes, hands, vocal cords, etc. (*GT* 314)

But if this is, or becomes, chronic, then there is neurosis:

> But in neurosis this same division is fateful, for it is seized on in order to prevent spontaneity; and the ultimate practical unity of sense and motion is lost. The deliberation occurs "instead of" rather than "along with": the neurotic loses awareness that the smaller motions are taking place and preparing the larger motions. (*GT* 314)

This again shows that the two modes must work together in harmony.

The self in the middle mode, then, combines or relates all the features (previously described) of the id and ego modes. This results in spontaneously growing toward the solution. If the id mode is blocked, the self is cut off from the ground; the need or problem that is actually most pressing does not reach awareness. If the ego mode is blocked, there is only the pressing need and no means of deliberately working towards its solution. As the person is a whole, any disruption of one process actually results in a disruption of the other.

## B. SELF MODES IN LATER WORKS

As stated in the introduction to this second part of the chapter, this section will cover more recent writings which include the formal dynamics of the self without the specific labels which were used in the original formulation. This will help join the themes of this dissertation project to issues more clearly seen as central to the present theory and practice of Gestalt Therapy--a connection which might be otherwise overlooked. There is additional value in reintroducing the labels for these dynamics, beyond the necessity for the purposes of this dissertation. For one thing, this aids keeping these dynamics in prominance. For another, it helps build toward a continuous and more integrated view of the theory of Gestalt Therapy, and aids in connection with other schools of therapy.

The disappearance of the labels would seem to be due to the nature of Perls' development. An examination of his writings shows a general tendency to become less explicitly theoretical in his statements, at least less rigorously so. He appears to have shifted his focus from the development of the theory to the implementation of the practice--and to "spreading the word" to other practicioners. Yet he never seemed to lose sight of much of the essence of what he had worked out or adapted from the ideas of others. This can be seen even in his last work (*The Gestalt Approach*), both in its discussion of the nature of the neurotic (in terms of lack of both self-support and self-regulation), and in the treatment of the concept of awareness. These concepts are the primary focus for this section's analysis.

### 1. *The Neurotic*

In *The Gestalt Approach*, it is clear that both self-support and self-regulation (also called the process of homeostasis) play a central role for the theory of the nature and origin of neurosis. (*GA* Ch. 1 and 3) Health is defined in part by the presence of these functions, neurosis by their absence. Other features of neurosis can be seen as stemming from interruptions of these two primary processes. These other features include the various forms of disturbances of the so-called contact boundary (or contact process). (*GA* Ch. 2; *TGTB* 83-87, 128-139) Means of contacting the environment, when disturbed, become by definition unhealthy. These means of contact include confluence, introjection, projection and retroflection. Simply defined, they are in order: the experience of oneness with another to the point there is little if any differentiation; the experience of taking in whole the dynamic (or quality) of another into oneself; the experience of a dynamic of oneself as apparently coming from another; and the experience of restraining an other-directed response and turning it back on the self. (*GA* Ch. 2; *TGTB* 83-87, 128-139) These contact functions can be healthy or unhealthy, (*GA* Ch. 2; *TGTB* 83-87, 128-139) and are unhealthy when the individual lacks self-support and self-regulation.

In the terms of the self-modes, self-support involves the id mode and self-regulation involves the ego mode. In Whitehead's terms, the difference between self-support and self-regulation may be seen as a close parallel to the difference between efficient causation and final causation. This will be taken up again in the integration of Gestalt Therapy with Whitehead. (Ch. 5) The parallel will be drawn only briefly below.

a. *Self-support.* In *The Gestalt Approach*, self-support is considered one of the "essential qualities" (*GA* 3) of the healthy person, and is missing in the neurotic. "Contact depends on what we call the support functions of the organism/environmental field." (*TGTB* 66) Contact is the figure and "support is the ground." (*TGTB* 66) Self-support, then, means being in touch with the ground, with the base of one's experience. In the terms previously described, this belongs to the experience of the id mode. The means of interference (self-manipulation), however, belongs to the ego mode. This will become clearer in the following summary of Perls' discussion of the nature of the neurotic. Keep in mind that "manipulation" is a major characteristic of the ego mode. The neurotic's disturbance is maintained not by manipulation *per se*, but by the choice of the objects of manipulation. The object or target includes the natural functioning of the organism in a way that keeps certain portions of this experience from an integrated awareness. This is the same as cutting oneself off from the ground, or keeping oneself from accepting (conforming to) this foundational experience. The other target of the neurotic's manipulation is the environment, including the therapist, in an attempt to get others to provide this support. The neurotic's goal involves preventing the natural development of his or her capacity for self-support in the organism-environmental field. The goal also involves perpetuating a dependency upon others when it is not needed but actually interferes with the individual's health and growth.

Here is a summary of Perls' last discussion about the neurotic: (*GA,* Ch. 3, 44-61; cf. *TGTB* 65-68) The neurotic comes to the therapist out of an "existential crisis," (*GA* 44) feeling an unmet existential need. (*GA* 45) The patient's need may vary from that of other patients and that of the therapist. It is not the therapist's job to make a value judgment concerning the need. (*GA* 45) The therapist's job is to assist patients in discovering their own capacities to meet this need, and this means setting the stage for them to discover the develop the missing self-support. (*GA* 45) The neurotic simply goes about the job in the wrong way. Instead of knowing how to meet the need, the neurotic attempts to get the therapist to do the job instead. The neurotic, that is, has the capacity to manipulate the environment, but does this indirectly (through the therapist, for example) instead of directly. (*GA* 46) The therapist is expected to fulfill the patient's needs, and is expected to provide the support for this goal. Unfortunately, the therapist is neither a magician nor a mind-reader, nor is the therapist inside the skin of the patient. The neurotic also manipulates his or her own self (or organism) in order to minimize the "effects" of his/her actual capacities for self-support. (*GA* 46)

The lack of actualized self-support and of a developing capacity for the same (i.e., maturation) is termed a "handicap" (*GA* 46) by Perls. The neurotic, says Perls, "is not a fool. He has to be pretty shrewd in order to survive" (*GA* 46) without this quality. "The neurotic's problem is not that he cannot manipulate, but that his manipulations are directed towards preserving and cherishing his handicap, rather than getting rid of it." (*GA* 47) This means that the goal of therapy is to assist persons to see that they do indeed possess the capacity to manipulate their field, and to see how they are doing this in the present: unnecessarily depending upon the therapist, as well as others, and minimizing the effects of their own efforts as well as their perception of their own effectiveness. (*GA* 47)

In terms of self-support, this does not mean that persons are or should become self-contained units, isolated from the world. Not at all. As Perls notes, "self-support is very difference from self-sufficiency." (*GA* 114) Just the opposite would be the case. Persons, that is, learn to be open to the support they actually need at the same time they learn to stop interfering with their own processes. It is at the stage of self-support that the individuals learn to open up themselves to their own contact with the ground and to others. Trust is another term which may be associated with this stage of contact or gestalt formation.

That Gestalt Therapy makes this distinction between self-support and self-sufficiency is not always clear to some of its critics.[4] This is not the place for a full proof of this point, but one or two examples may help suggest this conclusion. For example, Perls and others in this field make much of two features: the organism-environmental field and the process of contact and withdrawal with and from that field. The field is the context in which the individual lives. "No individual is self-sufficient; the individual can exist only in an environmental field." (*GA* 15) Contact (with the field) and withdrawal (from the field) is a dialectical process which continually occurs. (*GA* 21-23) "This contact . . . , this acceptance and rejection of the environment, are the most important functions of the total personality." (*GA* 22) In Perls' view, "this function seems to be part of the very rhythm of life itself." (*GA* 22) Health can be defined in terms of good contact (leading to the formation of a need-satisfying gestalt) (*GA* 23) and good withdrawal ("good" meaning, essentially, need-satisfying).

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[4] Personal experience, including various discussions with faculty and students at the School of Theology at Claremont.

Though much of Perls' description does not emphasize the benefit to the environment (which includes other persons, by definition), this is clearly necessary for a balanced, healthy person. Without a healthy environment, there could not be the context for health for the person. "If the relationship [between individual and environment] is mutually satisfactory, the individual's behavior is what we call normal." (*GA* 16) Also, "with this new outlook [provided by Gestalt Therapy], the environment and the organism stand in a relationship of mutuality to one another. Neither is the victim of the other." (*GA* 17) (What may be missing is an explicit appreciation of an other for the other's intrinsic worth; even this is implied, however, in the above summary.)

b. *Self-regulation.* (*GA* 5) This process grows out of the process just described. Without self-support, it is not possible to have self-regulation, at least in any adequate or fulfilling way. Instead of this being a process that is a strain, against considerable resistance, this in the ideal is an on-going function. This process of self-regulation is also described in terms of homeostasis. (*GA* 4-8; cf. *EHA*) It is related to the concept that the organism, when left to its own devices, will be able to take care of its needs in order of priority. When a need arises, and an imbalance occurs, the organism is able to right itself by fulfilling its need. Part of this is accomplished by proper manipulation of the environment (getting a glass of water when thirsty, and so forth).

Self-regulation stands in contrast with other-regulation. The latter occurs when persons see themselves as incapable of self-regulation, whether this is actually true or not. This may arise if they are not allowed to do for themselves. Such persons are, instead, at the mercy of others (in fact or fantasy). For whatever reason, they do not believe they can make the final determination of what they need to do and be at each moment. For adult neurotics, this ultimately is not true. Neurotics give this power away to others in some fashion.

c. *Middle mode and health.* Even in later writings, the healthy individual continues to be defined in terms which are like those of the middle mode previously described. Latner, as mentioned, discusses this at various points with some clarity, though his presentation is not as fully integrated as might be desired. (*TGTB* 22-26, 63-64, 70) Perls, even at the end of his career, still mentioned the *qualities* of the

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middle mode in the context of the true nature of the healthy person, even though he no longer uses the actual term:

> The true nature of man, like the true nature of any other animal, is integrity. Only in an integrated spontaneity and deliberateness does he make a sound existential choice. For both spontaneity and deliberation are in the nature of man. Awareness of and responsibility for the total field, for the self as well as the other, these give meaning and pattern to the individual's life. (*GA* 49-50)

In this case Perls has shifted his terms slightly. The earlier version of the middle mode was defined in terms of spontaneity, which in turn was described as including the polar qualities of relaxation (id mode) and deliberation (ego mode). In the last version, "spontaneity" has become one of the two poles and "relaxation" has been dropped. The other term (deliberation) is retained. "Spontaneity" is therefore the characteristic of the id mode in the latest definition of middle mode.[5]

The healthy individual, functioning in the (ideal) middle mode, is by definition not neurotic. It is only through adequate self-support and the resulting proper self-regulation that an individual can so function. This is the goal of therapy. Therapy moves toward this goal through a process of movement from other-support to self-support and other-regulation to self-regulation. When persons are able to trust their own legs, their own footing, they can support themselves. When they can support themselves, they can continue to regulate themselves. They can move or not as they need, they can take in what they need and reject what they do not. They can then assimilate (or integrate) what they have taken in and eliminate what they cannot assimilate, as they see fit. This healthy functioning will be characterized by functioning in the middle mode. Growth in therapy will therefore show an increase in the individual's functioning in this middle mode.

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[5] This shift in terms exemplifies the need for a systematic treatment of the theory of Gestalt Therapy. Which term is better? *Spontaneous*, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (pp. 659-660 of the regular edition, p. 2977 of the *Compact OED*), *means of one's own accord, freely*. Whatever arises or happens does so freely, without premeditation or effort, the result of an internal, natural impulse. The role of external stimulation and control is diminished.

There is a sense of the id mode in this, though not exclusively. This might be the term for the internal processes, following excitation (originating from within or from without), experienced in the id mode. Causality, however, is diminished in importance in this definition, yet deliberate organization also is not emphasized.

I believe therefore that *spontaneity* better describes the middle mode experience than it does the id mode experience. I prefer, that is, the earlier version where spontaneity is seen as characterizing the integrated experience as opposed to the later version (where it appears to describe the causal portion of the integrated experience). Spontaneity would seem to include causality, yet would appear to be inclusive of the other polarity as well.

d. *Efficient and final causation.* In Whitehead's terms, the individual as an occasion of experience (the self in the above context) always moves between these two poles in each instance of becoming. The self is totally influenced by others in the initial stage of becoming; this is *efficient causation* for Whitehead, or *self-support* for Gestalt Therapy. This support can be seen as conformity to or acceptance of the received experience. This is the base of the individual occasion's process of becoming. The individual occasion (the self at a given moment) also always determines the final nature of its own becoming; this is *final causation* for Whitehead, or *self-regulation* for Gestalt Therapy. This is self-regulation in terms of an active and self-directed process of selection and de-selection of what has been initially experienced in the first phase of becoming. The self-regulation continues to be expressed in the style (subjective form) of the integration of these various feelings of the past (i.e., the received experience). This comes as the conclusion of the process of becoming at one moment. The self, in summary, is totally influenced by others initially, then makes the ultimate and unique integration of and for itself on its own.

### 2. *Awareness*

Another concept emphasized strongly in later writings of Gestalt Therapy is *awareness*. Awareness by itself can be healing, according to Perls.[6] Though awareness is interconnected with much that has been described here, this integration will not be developed here. The main point is to show the relationship between the concept of awareness and the self-modes. Awareness in this useage tends to be described as a *receptive* experience, and not necessarily in terms of its content at a particular moment (the content may be other than receptive in quality). Awareness, therefore, would seem to be another way of describing the experience of the id mode. What one is aware of is one's experience of contact, whether perceptions or actions or thoughts. This is a receptive stance, even if receptive of whatever activity in which one is presently engaged. The subject receives the impressions of the moment, receiving them without change (even if what is received are the impressions of changing something.)

a. *Awareness vs. attention*. In contrast with awareness, along *this* dimension, is an active form of perception termed "attention." In *The*

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[6] Frederick Solomon Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* (Lafayette, CA: Real People Press, 1969), p. 16.

*Gestalt Approach,* Perls distinguishes awareness from attention in much the same way he earlier distinguished being attentive from paying attention. The "function of attention" is an active one: "'I concentrate . . . on this problem,'" is his example. (*GA* 10) "Awareness," on the other hand, "could be described as the fuzzy twin of attention." (*GA* 10) It is more "diffuse" and "implies a relaxed rather than a tense perception . . . ." (*GA* 10) One is aware, one focuses attention. (*GA* 10) (In the sense in which it is used in Chapter 5, awareness equals consciousness. In this setting, it depends upon the kind of feelings which dominate the consciousness as to whether awareness is more receptive or more active.)

b. *Health: Increase of awareness.* The fuller one's awareness the better one will be able to create a new and meaningful gestalt. In the ideal, that is, one is fully aware of one's present experience. What one is in contact with, the ground, is fully available for the creation of the new figure. The dis-ease is created when some portion of the experience is chronically split off, forced out of awareness (an activity), and therefore unavailable for inclusion in the new figure.

From this point of view, the aim of therapy is the "increase" (*GA* 55) or "the restoration of awareness."[7] This will make possible the needed "development and change," according to Naranjo.[8] This latter obviously would occur during the active, ego mode phase of gestalt formation. But first one has to increase or restore awareness, a process which can occur during therapy. In this aim, Gestalt Therapy follows the basic formula of depth psychology, according to Naranjo, seeing "that the essence of healing lies in the process of becoming conscious of the unconscious."[9] Gestalt Therapy, though, substitutes the term "awareness," which Naranjo feels "better suggests the sensory and feeling basis of such process."[10] Perls sees the concepts of the conscious and the unconscious as "purely mental in character," (*GA* 54) in contrast with awareness and unawareness which are "not purely mental. In terms of our definition, both awareness and unawareness seem to be a property of protoplasm, of which all living creatures are composed." (*GA* 55) Although expressed in different terminology, this view is shared and extended by Whitehead. In Chapter 4, it will be shown that each occasion of experience includes both a mental and a physical pole, and that all of reality is made up of such occasions (not just protoplasm).

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[7] Claudio Naranjo, "Contributions of Gestalt Therapy," in Herbert A. Otto and John Mann (eds.) *Ways of Growth* (New York: Viking Press, 1968), pp. 129-30.

[8] Ibid., p. 130.

The aim of increasing or restoring awareness leads quite naturally to one of the basic approaches of Gestalt Therapy: staying with one's present experience (or awareness of this).[11] (In contrast to "orthodox schools," Gestalt Therapy puts its emphasis on what the client knows, "on his areas of awareness," (*GA* 55) instead of on what the client does not know.) A client is asked to stay with this present experience. Most persons quickly will reach a point of avoidance, shown through thinking about, remembering, fantasying--in some way interrupting the flow of experience. In paying attention to the nature of the interruption, as well as the experience that prompted the avoidance response (found at the point of interruption), the person can begin to make important discoveries and then to take steps to enlarge his or her awareness.

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

The discoveries can include the nature of the *form* of the avoidance response. The form will include the *way* in which the client is addressing a particular audience, both with the avoidance response and about the avoided experience. This way of address suggests the person's orientation with the audience. The client, for example, may have been about to express a sense of his or her own strength. What comes through instead may be a statement of appreciation about the therapist's strength, said with an ingratiating smile. The client's inner and largely unaware audience may be demanding this, but not the presently external audience. *By enlarging on the experience through a change in activity the client will become more aware of their experience and therefore better able to integrate the split.* This change can be in either direction: exaggeration or suppression[12] of the response. The latter usually leads to the former. Asking a client, that is, to stop a certain activity calls attention to the activity, as does exaggeration; and once the activity is within awareness, it can then be exaggerated (expanded upon) more easily. In the example above, the client might be asked to become more in touch with his or her insincere, inappropriate appreciation by means of exaggerating the smile as well as giving a voice to the inner audience. By speaking aloud the introjected intolerance of overt displays of strength, the client can better sense the (now) self-imposed demands which interfere with growth. Clients, after all, usually will claim that they are in therapy because they want to be able to cope better than they have been. They want to be strong, in other words.

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[12] Suppression is conscious or aware inhibition.

The way to this more complete experience (or awareness) comes, as just noted, by *actively* exploring not only the form and direction of the "mental" avoidance, but also the form of the concomitant physical activities.

> Posture, movements of hands and feet, facial expression, intonation of the voice, all convey either the feeling that was excluded from awareness or the effort to ward it off or counteract it, or both. The function of the therapist here is to redirect the patient's attention to his experience of himself . . . .[13]

A thumbnail digging into an index finger, when contacted by the client, may suggest painful self-picking and complimentary compliant acceptance of this self-torture.

c. *Self-modes in therapy*. The therapist's role in relation to the self-modes is to ask the client to identify with, to engage in this formerly unaware and disowned activity. When the present *awareness* is blocked, the client is asked to become the blocking *activity*. "*As awareness leads to some action, so does deliberate acting lead to expanded awareness*."[14] These twin processes are obviously a polarity; the client moves back and forth between awareness and activity, both

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[13] Naranjo, p. 131.

[14] Ibid., p. 133.

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enhancing each other, and the client. These poles correspond to the two poles of the self (the id and ego modes). Naranjo calls them the "contemplative" and the "active" aspects of "one indivisible process . . . ."[15]

> We can become really aware of what we do or perceive only while doing it, and we can have the experience of being the actor, the doer, the perceiver, only when these functions are in our awareness.[16]

The formal dynamics, in their essence, are the same as the id mode (contemplative or receptive, not making changes) and the ego mode (active or engaged, making changes, including and excluding). The two together become the full expression of the middle mode. The middle mode experience is well-described by Naranjo:

> The end of conflict--the synthesis of opposites--involves being one with life, surrendering to the push of its stream and being "it" at the same time, relinquishing any individual will other than the will of life through us, our true self.[17]

The similarity to Whitehead's notion of a *contrast*, as well as the nature of concrescence (including the conclusion) and the becoming occasion's initial subjective aim, in the above quotation, is striking. This will become clearer in Chapters 4 and 5.

## PART THREE: INTEGRATION

This third and final part of this chapter will bring all preceding material together for a summary integration. This final step, which points to Chapter 5, will be approached through a section integrating the self modes, contact modes, figure-ground formulations, and

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[15] Ibid., p. 134.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., pp. 134-35.

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the stages of contact. This will be followed by a section arguing for the addition of the dynamic of de-structuring to the stages of gestalt formation (and, by necessity, to the group of contact modes). This section anticipates Whitehead's description of concrescence, specifically the phase of conceptual feelings. In this phase, the pure, formal possibilities inherent in objects are felt in complete abstraction from the actuality. In the conclusion of this third part, and the chapter, the various dynamics are summarized. This summary is followed by concluding remarks on the essential differences between the two primary self modes (id and ego).

## A. PRELIMINARY INTEGRATION

This section integrates the preceding discussion on the modes of the self with the material previously brought together: modes of contact, figure-ground formulations, and stages of contact. *The question to be settled* in this section, in preparation for Chapter 5's task, *is the nature of the correspondence of the three modes of the self with the stages of contact and their associated characteristics.* ("Characteristics," as used here, refers to the modes of contact and the various formulations of figure and ground.) Recall, too, that this whole thrust is in the context of bringing together some of the features of gestalt formation and of the theory of the self. This material corresponds roughly to Whitehead's theory of concrescence and his theory of perception, which in Chapter 4 will be discussed and brought together to a degree. Then in Chapter 5 all four major elements (gestalt formation and concrescence, and self modes and perceptual modes) will be brought together.

A word of caution: none of this is complete in any sense of the word. The aim is to provide a suggested order to the material that is not at this point included. One feature, for example, that is prominant in the more recent literature of Gestalt Therapy concerns the so-called five layers of neurosis.[18] Moving out of neurosis is movement through (intensifying one's awareness of) first the *phony layer* (roles and games), then the *phobic* (fear of pain) layer, then the *impasse* (the "stuck" point of lack of support from environment and the self), the the *implosion* (increasing one's intensity of experience of the pain), which releases the *explosion* (into joy, grief, orgasm, or anger). This formulation bears strong similarities to the main features presently under discussion, yet it cannot be integrated at this time without this project becoming unwieldy.

### 1. *Review of Concepts*

Recall the discussion at the start of this chapter, namely that the self is the agent in charge of the process of *forming* a gestalt. The self also has been described as *being formed* out of its system of contacts--which system develops through stages with their associated characteristics. A more precise formulation of the above question is, *"What is the degree and style of involvement by each of the modes in the various contact stages?"* In other terms, how does the self create itself through these various stages? It should be clear by this point that there is no clear-cut division between the self modes in terms of their operation in one or another stage of gestalt formation. Each mode, that is, can be more or less present in a given contact stage, and functioning therefore in one or another characteristic style. This point will become increasingly clear in the following, as well as in Chapter 5.

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[18] Frederik Solomon Perls, "Four Lectures," in Joen Fagan and Irma Lee Shepherd (eds.) *Gestalt Therapy Now* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 20-22, 24.

A full review of the contact stages and their associated characteristics would be pointless, but a simple summary should serve to clarify before proceeding:

1. Forecontact:
   a. Confluence: all ground.
   b. Introjection: need is figure, accepted given is ground.
2. Projective contact: the set of possibilities is figure, the need is ground.
3. Retroflective contact: experimentation is figure, the set of possibilities is the ground.
4. Final contact, characterized by egotism (most intense sense of self): solution or goal is figure, experimentation is ground.
5. Post-contact, characterized by confluence with the total given as ground (again).

The aim of the gestalt is given from the beginning (to resolve the initial excitement) and is fully realized at the end. The gestalt, then, is completed, the self in this formulation "perishes." This makes way for the new self-gestalt to emerge.

### 2. *The Integration*

The following is a distillation of the characteristics for each mode, followed in each case by integrative comments.

a. *Id mode*: In this mode, the self accepts the given without acting upon it. There is the equivalence of aware relaxation, and passivity in the non-motoric sense. The urge is felt strongly, yet vaguely, as is all the given. The urge stands out against the given to a degree, and in that sense orders the given in terms of relevance in an initial sense. The self feels intimately connected with the given by means of incompletely developed feelings (which objectify the world as it is for us). The emotions are appropriate to this objectification (equivalent to stance or viewpoint). If we are incorrect about the way the world is for us in a later mode (the ego), then the emotions can be "wrong." The contents of this mode (the "associations") are not tightly organized, but loose and scattered, perhaps "irrational" or "hallucinatory."

It is obvious from the terms used above that the id mode must be the dominant mode in fore-contact. Some of the key words and phrases are acceptance of the given (introjection), by which the urge or need is brought into the self. This differentiates the need out from the total given (figure and ground, respectively). This differentiation must be preceded, therefore, by confluence (by virtue of the rest of Gestalt Therapy's scheme).

The id mode also is assigned the experience of the given being dissolved into its possibilities. In the next section, this will be taken up in an additional contact stage which is assigned to neither the id nor the ego modes, but is presupposed by the nature of the ego mode (the concept which defines the stage is "de-structuring.")

In this non-active stage of vague or incomplete awareness (suggested by the incomplete feelings), this "raw data" out of the given might be characterized as loose and scattered, as well as perhaps irrational and hallucinatory. (The use of these terms, from the perspective of Whitehead's system, presupposes the more sophisticated modes, both for their creation but also for those labels.) The passivity as a state of being done to, but not doing to, implies a causality, a sense of being caused.

The experience of the possibilities in its initial sense also bears some resemblence to projective contact. The id mode, as will be shown by Whitehead's analysis, is intimately involved with this--but only as one component which is partly joined with the experience derived from the feeling of the pure possibilities (into which the given is dissolved). If the experience of pure possibilities is kept as a separate stage, then it would be clear that any discussion of a set of those possibilities, in the sense used in Gestalt Therapy, would be "subsequent" to this more primary experience. In this case, this would belong to the other direct self mode, the ego.

b. *Ego mode*: In this mode, the self is described as acting upon or engaging the given in order to restructure or create the solution to the need which first came into awareness via the other mode. The self is now active and aggressive, alert and deliberate. In this mode there is control of one's perception, and the background begins to diminish. There is a characteristic style of discrimination revealed through the mode's active process of identification and alienation as the new solution is created out of-discovered within the given material. In acting upon the given, the self has a much stronger sense of itself and, correspondingly, a stronger sense of isolation and separation from the scene. (This is necessary in order to act upon the not-self--the non-self, the objects, in other words.) There is a great deal of organization in this mode. Its associations are correspondingly additive.

It seems clear that the ego mode is dominant or involved in "retroflective contact" as well as perhaps final contact. As we shall see later, it is involved earlier as well, both at one level throughout the entire process (if the process is seen as non-temporal in a single instance), as well as more specifically in "projective contact."

For retroflective contact, the ego mode clearly is involved in the self's action upon and engagement with the given. Projective contact can be seen as a preliminary to this, a more conceptual and non-motoric version of the same process. Retroflection also involves this mode in its larger degree of control of experience and expression of the possible full response (which comes to pass in final contact).

The using up of the background is a tie between the third and fourth contact stages. As the set of possibilities is experimented with, some are eliminated or "used up," to the point where all but the final solution is left (stage four). The ego mode is involved in different ways, therefore, in both stages. This is likewise the case with discrimination (as it is revealed through the process of identification and alienation of self vs. not-self).

The stronger sense of self, and corresponding sense of isolation and separation from the field, belong to both stages (increasing with stage four over stage three). The organization in the ego mode also becomes increasingly unified as the single solution is arrived at; this would tie the id and the ego modes together along a continuum from vague to clear, undefined to highly defined or definite. This continuum includes the associations, which move from the irrational and scattered (id) to the additive organization (ego).

Yet there must be some earlier involvement by the ego mode in its role as the product of and producer of organization. Even at introjection, there is some organization of the given into accepted and non-accepted. This can be seen as the id mode's role of bringing or allowing in the given; which is then taken up and acted upon the ego mode. This is also seen in the self's preliminary definition of itself by virtue of what will fit (is compatible) and what will not. The mouth sets some general but distinct limits on what can get in and what cannot get in it.

c. *The middle mode*. The uniqueness of this mode is its mixture of the two primary modes. The middle mode is defined out of the interplay between the id and the ego. This is the essence of the self. This mode necessarily includes both polarities of the self in some sort of integration. There is, however, another sense in which the concept is used, one that is more specialized. When Perls, *et. al.*, speak of this as a characteristic of the artist (for example), they are describing actually the ideal interplay, an intense creative-creating experience which is unique. This peak of intensity and flexibility is the essence of health.

It should be clear that this ideal is a relatively rare experience. For the most part this is merely approximated. This approximation, however, must occur in some form *in virtually all experience* (this will be more evident after the discussion on Whitehead has been completed). This dual definition of the middle mode may cause confusion if the difference between the ideal and the actual is not clearly kept in mind. Perls, *et. al.,* on the one hand assign the middle mode to the self in general (and thereby to all contact stages), and on the other to only egotism found in final contact. This is where the self is most intensely defined, even if the intensity is greatly reduced because of impairment at one or both of the poles (id and ego).

The middle mode, then, is revealed from the very beginning, in the first stage of fore-contact as it is transformed into the second from confluent fore-contact to introjective fore-contact. It is revealed wherever there is *referral* of one primary mode to the other, as it *is* the mixture--or mixing--of the two modes. This implies, to some extent, a two "mind" nature of the person, which the self emerges out of as well as defines.

This extensive--yet in some ways too brief--summary should be kept in mind when covering the material in the next two chapters. Those with familiarity with Whitehead's thought should, by this point, sense the thrust of the argument to come in Chapter 5.

## B. FINAL INTEGRATION

In anticipation of Chapter 5, there needs to be some discussion of a "stage of contact" that more closely parallels what Whitehead discusses as the phase of conceptual feeling. In this phase the objects felt are the pure possibilities (in the absolute sense) which are experienced as fully realized in the received facts. As the received facts are the "given," and the given is experienced and received in fore-contact, this stage would have to lie between fore-contact and contact. In the first sub-stage of contact, the person experiences or is aware of the "set of possibilities." Though this is not made fully explicit, this is obviously the possibilities in relationship with the most relevant need. That is, this set of possibilities corresponds to what might be called a theory, or a set of theories. The two components to the theory are the facts abstracted to a degree tied to the contours or form. The latter are the pure possibilities with enough definiteness to be joined with the partly abstracted facts. All of this, as well as the later contact stages, suggests that there is some direct feeling of the pure possibilities in the given (or that might be related to the given). Despite this suggestion, there is nothing that clearly relates to this category about which Whitehead spends a great deal of effort elaborating.

### 1. *"De-structuring" as a Contact Stage*

One concept which may come closer--though still not a true equivalent--is the notion of "de-structuring." This process is described more definitely with the process of incorporation and assimilation. The concept, which will be elaborated below, provides a better overall solution to this difficulty than does any other feature of the theory. Other terms which come close, and which may be related, are the notions of "confusion" (not discussed here) and the "given dissolving into its possibilities." This latter is described as occuring during fore-contact, and is intertwined with this stage. The same problem exists for "de-structuring," as the analysis below details. One additional problem with de-structuring is its active implication. This word suggests an organism actively taking apart structure; whereas, conceptual feelings are implicitly passive. (Conceptual feelings are *conformal* to the eternal object.)

The *value in de-structuring* is that it is suggestive in its more general sense of what happens in Whitehead's scheme. The pure possibilities fully "ingressed" in the facts are abstracted from the given in the conceptual phase. At this level it is irrelevant whether they are abstracted *by* an agent particularly of the scale of a person--*they are given as abstracted* (under the direction of God's initial aim for the subject). The other major advantage is that as a process de-structuring can be more clearly seen as prior to projection (which is part of the reconstructive process), yet separable from introjection. (Perhaps if one blends the understanding of the "given dissolving" with the notion of de-structing, one may have the best solution.) First, however, it will be necessary to show where de-structuring may be located in Gestalt Therapy's scheme without doing damage to either the contact stages or the modes of contact--and while being fair to the general understanding of the literature.

### *De-structuring as Conceptual Feelings*

First, the definition of de-structuring: "Destroying (de-structuring) is the demolition of a whole into fragments in order to assimilate them as parts in a new whole." (*GT* 340) The principle behind de-structuring is perhaps most clearly seen in the eating process, where chewing occurs prior to any assimilation. But the theory does not limit this principle to eating:

> For any kind of creative reconstruction to occur there must first to some degree be a *de-structuring* of what already exists. The present parts of a given object, activity or situation must be recombined in a fashion more adequate to the requirements of the here-and-now actuality. This . . . [involves] a *re-evaluation* of how they need to go together. Apart from detailed analysis and taking apart (destruction), there can be no close contact, excited discovering, and true love for any object (which, as we use the term, always includes persons). (*GT* 67)

The concept obviously is generalized to include all features which can be contacted. This quotation also illustrates that de-structuring occurs prior to reconstruction, which parallels the difference between the second phase of concrescence and the third and fourth phases of concrescence.

The problem, as stated, is where in the process of gestalt formation the stage of de-structuring occurs. The theory is full of contradictions, as can be illustrated in the following quotations (they are numbered for later reference in the discussion):

1. What is assimilated is not taken in as a whole, but is first destroyed (de-structured) completely and transformed--and absorbed *selectively* according to the need of the organism. (*GT* 190)

2. Destroying, on the contrary, is a function of appetite. Every organism in a field grows by incorporating, digesting, and assimilating new matter, and this requires destroying the existing form to its assimilable elements, whether it be food, a lecture, a father's influence, the difference between a mate's domestic habits and one's own. . . . If the previous form is not totally destroyed and digested, there occurs, instead of assimilation, either introjection or areas of no contact. (*GT* 341)

3. [With reference to the stages of contact:] 1. Fore-contact: the body is the ground, the appetite or environmental stimulus is the figure. This is what is aware as the "given" or Id of the situation, dissolving into its possibilities. (*GT* 403)

4. [With reference to the stage at which gestalt formation is

> interrupted:] (4) During the conflict and destroying. Retroflection. (*GT* 451)

The first quotation suggests that de-structuring occurs *before* the stage of introjection (prior to being "taken in as a whole"); whereas the second quotation suggests that the reverse is true: "incorporation" is basically the equivalent of introjection, "digesting" is the equivalent of de-structuring, and "assimilation" is equivalent to reconstruction. *One incorporates (introjects) before one digests (destructures).*

The third quotation suggests that de-structuring begins with the *first* stage of contact (fore-contact) when it talks about the given "dissolving into its possibilities"; this is the formal equivalent of what happens in de-structuring. That is, these "possibilities" are the functional equivalent of the "assimilable elements" mentioned in the second quotation. The final (fourth) quotation assigns de-structuring to retroflection, and by implication to the more advanced stages of contact.

At one level, these contradictions leave one with the option of taking one's choice. A closer examination shows that perhaps the best choice is following fore-contact (and therefore following introjection), and before any of the more advanced stages of contact. First of all, the material in the first quotation is in the context of an argument against Freud's view that some introjects are healthy. The argument by Perls, *et. al.*, is that introjects must be assimilated or else they cause problems. The issue is not whether destroying occurs before or after introjection, but whether or not it is healthy or unhealthy for the organism if an introject remains unde-structured, yet within. De-structuring obviously must occur prior to (or along with) any assimilation. There is no logical necessity that de-structuring occur prior to introjection, however. The same issue is implicitly at hand in the second quotation, in the last sentence quoted. Here, it would be preferable if the authors had said that without assimilation, an introject remains intact (instead of saying that introjection occurs "*instead* of assimilation").

My primary argument has to do with the meaning of the word introjection. This term means, literally, "thrown within." The question is, at what point is the material "thrown within"? To take the analogy of the mouth, does this occur as the material initially passes past the lips (prior to chewing), or after it leaves the mouth? Without going into a complex argument as to the nature of the organism-environmental boundary, it seems quite reasonable that "within" can be considered as beginning with the lips of the mouth. If this is accepted, then it is clear that introjection occurs prior to any de-structuring which happens in the mouth (by means of saliva and chewing). The process of de-structuring, in fact, is a continuous one once the food passes through the lips, continuing in the stomach and the intestines. There is no exclusively single point at which de-structuring occurs. At the very least, then, the way is open to assigning de-structuring as subsequent to introjection. Moreover, a reasonable case can be made that introjection virtually always occurs prior to de-structuring: into the mouth, then chewing; into the stomach, then digestion; into the intestines, then further digestion. Even the cutting up of the food prior to putting it in the mouth is preceded by visual introjection. The same case can be extended to cover ideas, and so on. The only questions that may remain are 1) the problems posed by the third and fourth quotations; and 2) whether or not "de-structuring" is essentially the same as abstracting the pure possibilities from the given.

For the first question, the preceding argument as to the point at which de-structuring occurs generally would answer the problems posed by the third and fourth quotations: Until what is contacted is "within," it cannot be dissolved into its possibilities (third quotation). Any destroying which occurs during the process of retroflection (suggested in the fourth quotation) is due more to the reconstructive process which is still being experimented with at this stage. This is an internal process, in other words, whether or not the recombinations are being constructed externally or internally.[19]

The difference between "de-structuring" and abstracting (the second question posed above) involves the difference between substance and process. Yet, even the material quoted from *Gestalt Therapy* shows that the authors blur this distinction when they discuss ideas, relationships, and so on. De-structuring an idea into its "assimilable" fragments involves the same dynamics as chewing food, and ideas are clearly not "things" in the ordinary sense (though they are objects--

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[19] This also represents the difficulty posed by the difference of scale between a single gestalt, or occasion, and a whole series of them. It may be intuitively sensed that at the macro scale being discussed in the fourth quotation, there may be a returning to the pure possibilities lifted out at stage II of concrescence innumerable times in order to achieve the complex outcome desired.

eternal--in the Whiteheadian scheme). *It seems quite clear, therefore, that de-structuring as a concept is close to, if not fundamentally the same, as the process that Whitehead describes as abstracting the pure possibilities from the actual facts. Therefore, de-structuring can be seen as a way of describing what happens at the second phase of concrescence, and belongs between introjection (second sub-stage of fore-contact) and projection (first sub-stage of contact).*

This conclusion more clearly makes it possible for projection (from Gestalt Therapy) to be seen as involving what Whitehead calls "comparative feelings," primarily propositional feelings; and more clearly brings this portion of Gestalt Therapy in line with the projective aspect of presentational immediacy.

### 3. *Final List of Contact Stages and Modes*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | *Fore-contact* | |
| | a. *Confluence:* | In touch with the total given; no distinction between total given and self. |
| | b. *Introjection:* | Acceptance of some of the total given *within;* beginning of the *self* over against the *other*. |
| 2. | *De-structuring:* | Abstracting (completely) the pure possibilities from the accepted given; the given dissolving into its possibilities. |
| 3. | *Projection:* | Projecting the (set of) pure possibilities (abstracted from the accepted given) back onto the given; a theory. |
| 4. | a. *Retroflection:* | Experimenting with the changes that can be made in the given; guided by the set of possibilities which have been matched with the given. |
| | b. *Egotism:* | Discovery of the best solution possible out of the total possibilities experimented with; the solution which most closely fits the actual given and the actual need. |

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### 4. *The Self Modes*

Perhaps the most essential difference between the two primary modes of the self is the relationship of the pure possibilities with the given (brute facts). In one mode, the brute fact is taken as given. It can only be this way--it is, period. The "isness" is given and cannot be changed. In the other mode, the brute facts of the given are broken down closer to their "pure" possibilities. Then these possibilities are partially re-combined in a new fashion, so as to form a set of possibilities tied to the facts. (The "partially pure" possibilities are joined with the given.) The possibilities may range from the highly fanciful to the most concrete. The possibilities may include changes in the external situation, or in the internal situation (ranging from attitudes to bodily processes), or both. Then this set of possibilities tied with the given is in turn compared with the given in order to provide (produce) the best possible solution. What is best may include any number of needs; the degree of complexity and originality of the solution determines in a sense the intensity or profundity of the actual solution decided upon at the conclusion of the process. This in turn can be seen as dependent upon the degree of acceptance of the originally total given (in the phase of introjection); as well as the level of originality of the possibilities lifted out in the phase of de-structuring; how imaginatively they are viewed against the given in projection; and how creatively they are played with in retroflection. The final solution must be capable of being realized; therefore, it is inherently tied to reality. Yet intuitively the more original and imaginative outcome would seem more likely to be more profoundly satisfying--taking into account a broader range of needs within the person and in the external world.

## Chapter 3

# WHITEHEAD'S THEORY OF PERCEPTION FROM *SYMBOLISM*

Whitehead's account of his theory of perception in *Process and Reality* is exceedingly complex, linguistically opaque, interwoven with his theory of becoming, and therefore is not easy to grasp. Whitehead wrote an earlier version of basically the same theory in *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect*.[1] This work is less complex, linguistically more transparent, and presented (briefly) on its own merits. As such, it is a more suitable place to begin the summary of his theory of perception. The account in *Symbolism* also has the advantage of being basically compatible with not only the theory of perception in *Process and Reality* (*PR*), but also with the theory of *becoming* (called *concrescence*). By means of this brief summary, the reader unfamiliar with Whitehead will be better prepared to deal with the more extensive review of his ideas in the following chapter. The latter account hopefully affords considerably more richness to the reader's experience--of Whitehead as well as appreciation for the dynamics which he seems to capture as they may relate to the reader's chosen field.

There are three aspects of the process of perception. Two are complementary styles of pure and direct perception. The third is the means of relating the two, producing what we normally call "perception." They will be dealt with in the following order: *causal efficacy, presentational immediacy,* and *symbolic reference*.

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[1] Alfred North Whitehead, *Symbolism* (New York: Macmillan, 1927).

## A. CAUSAL EFFICACY

Causal efficacy at bottom is simply perception of the "causal efficaciousness" of the world that encounters and is encountered by the person. This is the experience of things happening to us, the sense of being "done to" by something or someone else. *Conformation* is another way to see this experience: "The perception of conformation to realities in the environment is the primitive element in our external experience. We conform to our bodily organs and to the vague world which lies beyond them." (43)[2] The conformation is both to our body and to the external world. The body and the world so experienced are, technically, the past. (True contemporaries--simultaneous events, that is--cannot perceive each other. By means of the other direct mode of perception--presentational immediacy--contemporaries perceive the immediate past projected into the present. This will be covered in more depth later.)

As the perception in this mode is of the past, it is experience of "contact with the things gone by, which lay their grip" (44) upon us, of "characters mysteriously moulding our own natures," (44) of "controlling presences." (56-57) This portion of our perception is felt as "a heavy, primitive experience," (44) one which is "more prominent both in apparent behavior and in consciousness, when the organism is low grade." (41-42) For higher grade organisms, such as human beings, the experience does not usually dominate. When it does, it is by means of a reversion.

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[2] All references in this chapter are from *Symbolism*. (Ibid.) Hence only the page number(s) will be given. Thus, "(43)" indicates that the material is to be found on page 43 of *Symbolism*.

> Such a reversion occurs when either some primitive functioning of the human organism is unusually heightened, or some considerable part of our habitual sense-perception is unusually enfeebled. (44)

This could happen when the body is experiencing severe pain or deprivation, or when we have altered our "habitual" perception by means of drugs, or during sleep (in dreams, for example). It might be added that such alteration of perception is both the means and the goal, at times, during therapy--including Gestalt Therapy.

This primitive experience is vague; what is perceived is vaguely perceived. The experience of conformation itself is perceived "vaguely," (43) and so is the sense of relationship of "'oneself' and 'another' in the undiscriminated background." (43) The "exact discrimination of thing from thing, and of position from position, is extremely vague, almost negligible." (55) "There is no adequate definition of localization . . . ."(55) This vagueness of localization includes the world and the body, though the body is a different case:

> There is still vagueness in comparison with the accurate definition of immediate presentation; although the locality of various bodily organs which are efficacious in the regulation of the sense-data, and of the feelings, are fairly well-defined in the pure perceptive mode of causal efficacy. (55-56)

The "vagueness of the spatial and temporal perspectives" (55) in this mode gives rise to "error" in the full or complete perception (symbolic reference). (55)

Though things perceived in this mode are "unmanageable, vague, and ill-defined," (57) they are our usual source of meaning:

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> But for all their vagueness, for all their lack of definition, these controlling presences, these sources of power, these things with an inner life, with their own richness of content, these beings with the destiny of the world hidden in their natures, are what we want to know about. (57)

This mode of perception, then, is also the perception of meaning and importance, by contrast with the other pure perceptual mode (presentational immediacy).

It can be noted here that the above account of causal efficacy bears certain strong similarities to the id mode of the self in Gestalt Therapy. Some of the characteristics which the two share are, in the terms expressed above, being done to, conformation, experience as heavy and primitive, vagueness, undiscriminated background, poor discrimination of self and other (as well as thing from thing, place from place). See Chapters 2 and 5.

## B. PRESENTATIONAL IMMEDIACY

Presentational immediacy at bottom is simply one's perception of the world as it is immediately presented: it is the experience of things out there, around us, at the present moment. The perception in this mode is "what is usually termed 'sense-perception.'" (21) In this mode, instead of conformation, there is *independence*. (25) These events in the immediate present do not influence us, though they are relevant:

> [Presentational immediacy] expresses how contemporary events are relevant to each other, and yet preserve a mutual independence. This relevance amid independence is the peculiar character of contemporaneousness. (16)

The relevance is expressed in the awareness that these independent, contemporary events appear as elements "constitutive of our own experience." (21) That is, though "external" and separate, they are "*objectively* in our experience . . . ." (25) How is this appearance of these external elements in our experience made possible?

> This appearance is effected by the mediation of qualities, such as colours, sounds, tastes, etc., which can with equal truth be described as our sensations or as the qualities of the actual things which we perceive. These qualities are thus relational between the perceiving subject and the perceived things. (21-22)

(The qualities are also called "sense-data.") (25) One can have the sensation of blueness, and at the same time the wall is blue. (The fact that we perceive a blue *wall* is actually due to the combined perception; that is, symbolic reference.)

That these events are separate and not capable of being influenced does not mean that our experience in this mode of perception is equally uncontrollable. Perception in this mode is

> to a large extent controllable at will. I mean that one moment of experience can predetermine to a considerable extent, by inhibitions, or by intensifications, or by other modifications, the characteristics of the presentational immediacy in succeeding moments of experience. (23-24)

This suggests that this mode is capable of giving rise to additional novelty or originality. This also suggests the sophisticated or "high grade" character of this mode:

> This presentational immediacy is only of importance in high-grade organisms, and is a physical fact which may, or may not, enter into consciousness. Such entry will depend on attention and on the activity of conceptual functioning, whereby physical experience and conceptual imagination are fused into knowledge. (16)

The importance of this mode of perception in our experience helps to make us different from the wall.

In contrast with the vagueness of causal efficacy, this mode of perception is vivid and distinct, and the source of our ability to make definite discriminations:

> The definite discrimination, which in fact we do make, arises almost wholly by reason of symbolic reference from presentational immediacy. (55)

> For human beings, this type of experience is vivid, and is especially distinct in its exhibition of the spatial regions and relationships within the contemporary world. (14)

The appearance of the solidarity of actual things, perceived in this mode, is derived from the distinctness of the perception of spatial regions and relationships. Our experience of solidarity is due to our experience of "participation in an impartial system of spatial extension." (23)

When we perceive a solid wall, we perceive it as a spatial region out there; if we have a pain in our foot, we judge the location with reasonable accuracy. Whitehead discusses this process of localization in terms of projection, though he makes a distinction not normally made. Whitehead at one point says that we perceive the contemporary world "by means of our projection of our immediate sensations," (13) and then clarifies this:

> There are no bare sensations which are first experienced and then "projected" into our feet as their feelings, or onto the opposite wall as its colour. The projection is an integral part of the situation, quite as original as the sense-data. (14)

Keep in mind that this mode of perception is our way of knowing the spatial extensiveness of contemporary spatial regions, and that these events are seen as external to us. Thus, *projection really means that we know via this mode of perception where a sensation comes from with clarity, vividness, definiteness*. The sensation of blueness arises from our perception of that blue wall (spatial region) "over there." The wall is defined by its spatial extensiveness, the fact that it is a spatial region out there; its quality (sense-datum) of blueness is what is both in our experience and in the wall.

In contrast with causal efficacy, this mode is not the usual source of meaning, but is instead used more often as the symbol (which is referred to the meaning).

> The reason why the projected sense-data are in general used as symbol, is that they are handy, definite, and manageable. . . . There are limits to this handiness of the sense-data: but they are emphatically the manageable elements in our perceptions of the world. (56)

Projected sense-data are more often used as the symbol, not only because they are manageable, but also because they do not provide much knowledge when perceived in this mode. Knowledge provided by the sense-data in this perceptual mode is "barren" (23) of meaning and history. That which is perceived in this mode is therefore not as "freighted" or laden with extensive meanings. The result is that what is perceived in this way is more easily shifted from one context to another. That which has extensive and inherent implications or inferences (meanings) cannot be so easily given new meanings or histories, whether ones that run contrary or ones that are arbitrarily different. (The former may actually be easier to do than the latter, based on Whitehead's notion of a *contrast* from *PR*.) The old meanings continue to press themselves upon the present.

Presentational immediacy "displays a world concealed under an adventitious show, a show of our own bodily production." (44) Presentational immediacy "is the superficial product of complexity, of subtlety; it halts at the present, and indulges in a manageable self-enjoyment derived from the immediacy of the show of things." (44) That is, the "world disclosed in immediate presentation, gay with a thousand tints,

[is] passing, and intrinsically meaningless." (47) The meaninglessness is due to the fact that perception in this mode is perception of only what exists at the present moment. The meaning--the history--is provided from the past. It takes considerable experience to know that what is perceived is a wall; the fact that it is known as a wall means that the person has had a history with the wall (and that the wall has had a history as well). In summary:

> The main facts about presentational immediacy are: (i) that the sense-data involved depend on the percipient organism and its spatial relations to the perceived organism; (ii) that the contemporary world is exhibited as extended and as a plenum of organisms; (iii) that presentational immediacy is an important factor in the experience of only a few high-grade organisms, and that for the others it is embryonic or entirely negligible. (23)

In anticipation of Chapter 5, some of the similarities between the ego mode of the self and presentational immediacy are expressed in the following concepts: The emphasis on things or objects out there, around us, which have a characteristic of independence in a non-causal fashion; and which are clearly separate from the subject. Another feature is the understanding that it is in this mode that changes are made; that in this mode new experiences are created or fashioned out of the given. Vividness or distinctness with the related capacity to produce discriminations ("it is clearly this, not that") also are involved with the ego mode. The sense of solidarity, in terms of the world in relationship to the perceiver, also bears resemblance to this self mode, as does the dynamic of projections found in presentational immediacy. Another intriguing feature in the perceptive mode is the assignment of meaninglessness to it when it is the primary or exclusive mode. (This resembles not only the ego mode's potential to diminish meaningful experience when it is overly dominant, but also a feature inherent in *propositional feelings*. The latter are discussed in the context of concrescence and involve the sense of "itness" of the logical subject of a proposition.) This perceptive mode also concerns itself with the "here-and-now" stressed in Gestalt Therapy.

## C. SYMBOLIC REFERENCE

The discussion thus far has been focused primarily on the two pure modes of perception. These two modes are related in human perception, and this relationship is effected by symbolic reference.

> Thus the result of symbolic reference is what the actual world is for us, as that datum in our experience productive of feelings, emotions, satisfactions, actions, and finally as the topic for conscious recognition when our mentality intervenes with its conceptual analysis. (18-19)

This perception is the result of the integration through mutual referral between the two pure modes:

> The synthetic activity whereby these two modes are fused into one perception is what I have called "symbolic reference." By symbolic reference the various actualities disclosed respectively by the two modes are either identified, or are at least correlated together as interrelated elements in our environment. (18)
>
> Symbolic reference holds between two components in a complex experience, each intrinsically capable of direct recognition. (10)

Symbolic reference is *between* the two pure modes of perception and therefore is to be distinguished from the latter pair's "direct referral" between perceiver and the world.

Direct recognition is "immediate acquaintance with fact," (7) which is possible only with presentational immediacy and causal efficacy. Such direct recognition or direct experience "is conscious recognition of a percept in a pure mode, devoid of symbolic reference." (19) The two pure modes belong, then, "to the ultimate texture of experience," (46) in contrast with symbolic reference. Because symbolic reference is not direct experience, it is "very fallible"; direct experience is infallible: "What you have experienced, you have experienced." (6)

These three modes of perception are three kinds of perception by a perceiver. In the first two (the "pure" modes), the perceiver is in direct contact with the world (including the body and the external environment). These are two direct ways of relating the perceiver to the world. In symbolic reference, the perceiver is, in a sense, in direct contact with each of the two pure modes. The perceiver, in this direct contact, refers them to each other, and therefore also may be seen as in direct contact with the union produced by their referral. It would seem, then, that the perceiver in symbolic reference makes direct contact with each of the two modes, refers them to each other, and is in direct contact with the "product" of this reference.[3]

In his discussion of symbolic reference, Whitehead clearly is discussing the symbolic functioning of the human mind. In this activity

> some components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions, and usages, respecting other components of its experience.

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[3] This may suggest a "temporal" sequence. In the review of *Process and Reality* in the next chapter, the non-temporal nature of experience is emphasized as the correct perspective. Events, such as acts of perception, define time but do not happen "within" time. Hence, the above description may be misleading in this respect.

> The former set of components are the "symbols," and the latter set constitute the "meaning" of the symbols. (8)

The symbol refers to the meaning; however, both the symbol and the meaning are part of the perceiver's direct experience of the world--i.e., the two pure modes that are being discussed. One pure mode serves as the symbol, the other as the meaning. There is, however, no requirement that there should be a symbolic reference between the two modes, nor that the reference be from one mode only to the other mode only. (9-10) There could be referral *within* one pure mode. This means also "the nature of their relationship does not in itself determine which is symbol and which is meaning." (10) In general, however, "the more usual symbolc reference is from the less primitive component as symbol to the more primitive as meaning." (10) The reference, in other words, is usually from presentational immediacy as symbol to causal efficacy as meaning.

The experience of the symbol and of the meaning are alike in that they are both direct and infallible. It is only when the two are related through symbolic reference that one can have error.

> In short, truth and error dwell in the world by reason of synthesis: every actual thing is synthetic: and symbolic reference is one primitive form of synthetic activity whereby what is actual arises from its given phases. (21)

Simply put, a symbol can be fused with the wrong meaning, and vice versa. (In terms discussed in Chapter 4, error can arise in other ways, within one or both of the two pure modes. Within the context of one mode, though, there is no error. Error does not arise until there is a comparison between the direct experience and the actual world. Such error can be quite fruitful, though not necessarily.)

A simple illustration may help demonstrate the nature of error which arises by means of relating the symbol and the meaning. A man working in his garden is presented with a spatial region defined by certain colors in a certain arrangement. This is the symbol. The meaning attached to this arrangement may be "flower," say a pansy. Without the prior history of the plant, and the history of the gardener with that plant, the specific spatial arrangement of colors would be gay, passing, and meaningless. The prior existence of the plant and the prior experience with the plant on the part of the perceiver make for accurate symbolic reference: this arrangement in the present moment is a flower. Let us assume that this gardener also has had prior experience with hearing sounds with the meaning of someone approaching him, such as his wife. While in his garden, he is sleepy. The sun is warm and he has been working hard. He is resting on the grass, lightly dozing and thinking of his wife who is also working outside. He hears his wife's approaching footsteps, turns his head toward the flower bed, and sees the pansies blowing gently in the wind. For a moment, though, he sees not a pansy but the face of his wife. For a moment, he believes that the flower is actually his wife walking toward him. (The arrangement of the features on the pansy is, of course, much like a face.) The meaning (wife approaching) which is not itself present in the flower becomes fused with the arrangement immediately presented. The meaning was part of the immediate past for the gardener, contributing to the present moment. The symbol in this case actually belonged to the meaning "flower"; however, through symbolic reference, the erroneous synthesis was made. This requires that the correct meaning be somehow excluded or diminished.

For humans, in addition to the error proper, there are other problem areas. Two would have to do with the excessive dominance of, if not exclusion by, one mode or the other. A variation of the above illustration could show the same gardener simply not recognizing the arrangement. What is immediately presented would have no meaning. This would not be an error, *per se*; simply that the meaning was isolated from the symbol and excluded from the full perception. In the ideal, one can isolate the two pure modes. "Such isolation, or at least some approach to it, is fairly easy in the case of presentational immediacy, but is very difficult in the case of causal efficacy." (54) Thus it is in fact easier to experience the symbol devoid of meaning that it is to experience meaning alone. Actually, however, such absolute purity "devoid of any symbolic reference, is in practice unobtainable for either perceptive mode." (54) So, in actual experience, symbolic reference is always present, at least to some degree.

Whitehead seems to be saying, though, that one may have an experience almost totally given over to (or dominated by) presentational immediacy, with negligible experience of causal efficacy; and far less the other way. In human experience, this could underlie one major form of dis-ease, namely the sense of isolation, meaninglessness, barrenness, lack of importance, and diminished capacity for feelingful expressions. The meaning has been diminished, and in this case the meaning is what arises from the more distant past.

Experiences overly dominated by causal efficacy also cause problems for people. These experiences could include a strong sense of meaning (say, fear or anxiety) that is "free floating" (always present regardless of the symbol). For humans, the form of error to which this mode would contribute is illustrated in the paragraph above. A version of this type of error could show up in therapy as inaccurate projections: the therapist thinks I'm stupid, believes the client, when in fact this is not the case. The meaning arose in the distant past and has no roots in the external immediate situation.

Symbolic reference, as alluded to above, requires a common ground of some sort between the symbol and the meaning. This common ground, according to Whitehead, must be something that "can be expressed without reference to the perfected percipient . . . ." (9) That is, this commonality must exist on its own, without the operation of the perceiver. Yet, too, this commonality "also requires some activity of the percipient which can be considered without recourse to the particular symbol or its particular meaning." (9) That is, the perceiver has a role in relating these two direct experiences; the relationship itself is not automatically given by the symbol and the meaning. It is made by the perceiver.

What are these common elements?

> There are two elements of common structure, which can be shared in common by a percept derived from presentational immediacy and by another derived from causal efficacy. These elements are (1) sense-data, and (2) locality. (49)

*Sense-data* are required and given for presentational immediacy, but they "enter into experience in virtue of the efficacy of the environment." (52) Simply put, the sense-data enter into the subject in the mode of causal efficacy; the environment imposes these data upon the subject. The subject in turn sees the data as having arisen from specific *locations* in the environment. In the ideal operation of symbolic reference, then, there are these common grounds.

There is still another relationship expressed between the two, a relationship which is inherent in what has been described. This might be called the *generic relationship* of causal efficacy and presentational immediacy for symbolic reference by the perceiver. This relationship is not found in the data themselves, but in the perceiver. This relationship holds whether or not the symbolic reference made is accurate or inaccurate (the full technical explanation of this statement will have to wait for the section from *Process and Reality*).

The generic relationship is involved in the order in which the two experiences arise: "First the causal side of experience is dominating, then the sense-presentation gains in subtlety." (49) In fact, and this is the heart of the generic relationship, *the latter is derived from the former*:

> The sense-data are "given" for presentational immediacy. . . . But what is already given for experience can only be derived from that natural potentiality which shapes a particular experience in the guise of causal efficacy. (50)
>
> The sense-data, required for immediate sense-perception, enter into experience in virtue of the efficacy of the environment. This environment includes the bodily organs. (52)

In presentational immediacy, the sense-data "are projected to exhibit the contemporary world in its spatial relations." (50) Their role in causal efficacy is "to exhibit the almost instantaneously precedent bodily organs as imposing their characters on the experience in question." (50) One can see from this the importance that Whitehead gives to the role of the body in perception. This includes the body's sense organs:

> Sense-data, functioning in presentational immediacy, are "given" by reason of "eyes," "ears," "palates" functioning in causal efficacy. . . . This double reference is the basis of the whole physiological doctrine of perception. (51)

This notion of a "double reference" is expressed in a variety of ways throughout the theory. This, in essence, defines the *linking role played by sense-data between the two perceptive modes*:

> Every such datum constitutes a link between the two perceptive modes. Each such link, or datum, has a complex ingression into experience, requiring a reference to the two perceptive modes. These sense-data can be conceived as constituting the character of a many-termed relationship between the organisms of the past environment and those of the contemporary world. (53)

This linking role corresponds, obviously, to symbolic reference, but also to features of concrescence and of the self modes. Other features, naturally, are linked. *Locality* is one:

> The partial community of structure, whereby the two perceptive modes yield immediate demonstration of a common world, arises from their reference of sense-data, common to both, to localizations, diverse or identical, in a spatio-temporal system common to both. (53)

With this there is a full unity to the process of perception based upon the role of sense-data. They are that which is shared in common to the two modes, along with locality; yet they are also inherently involved in the fact that locality is what is a common ground between the two modes. Sense-data, further, are the means of relating the two modes; there must be a feature which corresponds to this style of effectiveness--indeed, they are quite evidently relational forms. (This will be more clearly and fully discussed in Chapter 4, both in terms of sense-data and sensa as well as in terms of relational eternal objects as opposed to eternal objects involved with determining the subjective form.)

The following quotation, for me, summarizes well the two modes in their dynamic tension:

> The bonds of causal efficacy arise from without us. They disclose the character of the world from which we issue, an inescapable condition round which we shape ourselves. The bonds of presentational immediacy arise from within us, and are subject to intensifications and inhibitions and diversions according as we accept their challenge or reject it. . . . Thus the causal efficacy *from* the past is at least one factor giving our presentational immediacy *in* the present. The *how* of our present experience must conform to the *what* of the past in us. (58)

Some indication has been given already of the relevance of symbolic reference for what Gestalt Therapy calls the middle mode of the self. Perhaps the most important feature is that this is a mode which mixes or merges two polar qualities--in varying degrees. This proves to be quite illuminating for understanding the nature of the middle mode experience in the context of the two primary self modes (the id and the ego).

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# Chapter 4

# *PROCESS AND REALITY*: CONCRESCENCE AND PERCEPTION

The aim of this chapter is to summarize and partially integrate Whitehead's theories of concrescence and perception as developed in *Process and Reality*. This chapter may appear complex, yet it is in no way a true summary of the theories in his major work. There is no adequate way of summarily abbreviating this work. One part inevitably leads to the next, and each part is distributed throughout the entire work. There must, therefore, be a great deal of arbitrariness in the decision as to what to include and what to exclude. The guide for this present summary is provided by the next chapter. Chapter 4 includes largely what seems most valuable for understanding the points to be made in Chapter 5.

## PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

### A. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The organization of the material presented here poses a similar problem. Within *Process and Reality* (Whitehead's most mature development of his ideas in their most complete form), there are too many places to begin, and no real ending. This is not to suggest that there is no order within his exposition. The order, however, is not initially clear. Also, the wholistic quality of the system is present throughout, such that the impact of a given concept is assumed at the beginning but only known most completely at the end.

### *Organization of the Chapter*

The approach taken here will be to break Whitehead's material into two major parts, concrescence and perception, and to discuss features of each prior to their integration. Concrescence will come first. There are two major sections on concrescence. The first might be described as an analysis of certain features of an actual occasion. Within this section, the general notion of an actual occasion will be developed over a variety of important concepts. The dominant occasion will be discussed next; the dominant occasion is a special form of an actual occasion, and is that occasion we know as our "self" that is dominant at each moment. That naturally includes its relationship with the body. The third feature of this section will be an analysis of eternal objects. These are the pure, unqualified possibilities which are in part the formal qualities of an actual occasion. They counterbalance the actuality. This involves some discussion of God.

The second major section on concrescence deals with the dynamics of the becoming process. A way to approach this is to see that the actual occasion as an object and an eternal object are what are intertwined or integrated in order to form a new occasion. More correctly, it is the subject's *feelings* of actuality and of pure potentiality that are integrated in order to create the new actual occasion. In this second section, the descriptions of what happens, how this happens, and what the outcomes are provide the focus. This is approached through discussion of the *phases* of the (non-temporal) concrescent process.

Perception in *PR* is approached here largely through its integration with the themes developed in the overall discussion of concrescence. The material on perception in Chapter 3 will not be repeated except in the context of its integration with concrescence. Some new material will be added from *PR* in order to make this integration more complete. More specifically, the two primary modes of perception (causal efficacy and presentational immediacy) will be discussed in terms of their relationships with features of concrescence (in this case, physical feelings and propositional feelings, as well as conceptual feelings and feelings of physical purposes). The mixed or integrated mode of perception (symbolic reference) will be discussed in terms of its relationship to the most complex phase of concrescence (intellectual feelings).

This section on perception, in other words, will largely complete the presentation of the material from Whitehead. As such, the integration provided here will be the basis for the discussion in Chapter 5, where Whitehead's system is brought together with the integrated material on Gestalt Therapy. The integration provided in this conclusion to Chapter 4 will allow each facet of both systems to be more clearly discussed in a variety of ways. To take but one example, perception in the mode of causal efficacy can be discussed as it relates to physical feelings in concrescence, and therefore as these feelings relate to other phases of concrescence; as well as in terms of the id mode of the self, and with certain features of the various stages of gestalt formation. The general purpose of these integrations is to open up the discussion to a larger arena, bounded yet vast. The arena is so vast, in fact, that it will not be possible to discuss all the possible permutations in even general terms, let alone in detail. Some of the suggested connections and organizational properties made possible through this overall integration will find development in the Appendix.

Before actually introducing the reader to *Process and Reality*, it may be advisable to suggest some ways to approach Whitehead. With the inherent problems in offering unsolicited advice in mind, it still seems important to offer some suggestions based on my own experience.

## 2. *Suggestions for Approaching Whitehead*

For the reader unfamiliar with Whitehead's thought, the material presented below likely will appear complicated at times. Beyond the attempt to offer clarity in the text of this dissertation by means of repeated definitions and experientially grounded illustrations, as well as internal restatements and summaries, I would like to offer some preliminary assistance.

The first is a suggestion as to how to approach the material. Let the meaning come through intuitively at the start. Allow the categories to appear and disappear, yet track what seems most interesting. Whatever is pursued will end up leading to other areas as well; this is inherent in the system and in the worldview it attempts to describe. Secondly, I have stated some of the excitement I find in Whitehead at the start of the introductory section of this chapter. Perhaps what is important or exciting for me will be meaningful to others. The reader will know where I am coming from, at the very least.

Sherburne's *Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality* is another place to begin.[1] Sherburne takes Whitehead's words and lifts them from their original setting, grouping comments along a major theme in a way that Whitehead did not. Yet Sherburne's presentation on concrescence, as well as his diagrams, overly emphasize sequentiality, and are misleading in other respects. Despite this, the book remains a valuable aid, particularly for rechecking definitions, as well as for finding large blocks of Whitehead's remarks on certain topics all in the same place. It is an *aid*, however, and will be outgrown (or will become a premature stopping point). There is a lot which he does not include, either. Finally, I have included explicit references to Gestalt Therapy's concepts and categories. Assuming they initially may be more meaningful than Whitehead's material, these references serve as illustrations, as well as to continue the overall integration. Ultimately, of course, the only way to approach Whitehead is through his own words in their original setting.

### 3. *Appeal of Whitehead*

The appeal and excitement of Whitehead for me is much like the appeal and excitement of therapy. There is a gradual and at times startling revelation of meaning in both, moving from the vague or indefinite to the clear or definite; and the movement continues to draw me forward as I grow and want to grow. There is pain and confusion in this process as well. What seems nagging and irrelevant at one moment suddenly becomes clearly central the next--only to disappear into vagueness or painful confusion later on. This process (for me) describes the course of therapy; this description is confirmed by clients as well as other practicioners.

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[1] Donald W. Sherburne (ed.) *A Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966).

My encounter with Whitehead's thought has moved along roughly the same continuum. For a long time I found myself annoyed at his ideas and his complexity, yet I kept returning. Sometimes his categories have seemed so general and so abstract as to be either meaningless (without reference) or too obvious to be mentioned. Recently, while working this material through (and through and through) for this project, I realized that I was no longer on the outside looking in, but inside an incredibly powerful system. There is a power that seems intrinsic to the system that intuitively feels linked with an even more powerful thrust, one that is perhaps universal. The intrinsic power finds expression in its capacity to organize understanding of the seemingly basic forms in a variety of fields, related and seemingly unrelated (different schools of therapy, or the issues involved in the international food movement, for example).

### 4. *Creativity and the Creative Advance*

This power is the "creative advance" in Whitehead's system (*PR* 32),[2] and is the nature of the "force" in the lines of poetry by Dylan Thomas quoted at the beginning of this dissertation. The first three lines in particular tell the story of good and evil:

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[2] For explanation of abbreviations, see p. ix.

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees
Is my destroyer.

For Whitehead, God is the "primordial, non-temporal accident" (*PR* 11) of the ultimate principle, which is creativity. As with other features of reality, Whitehead has given me a far more meaningful understanding of God, and of how God works in the world, which includes my life and my professional activity (therapy).

The power of Whitehead's system also has helped me order what I actually do in therapy, as well as understand the system or structure behind my approach. Only the latter will find any full development in this dissertation. This is partially because it has received greater attention through the development of this project. The former, as well, is not as clearly developed for me yet; I need more experience doing therapy that is informed by process thought. The two features are obviously related, yet they are separate. The latter is my intellectual assimilation of the theory I have learned, whereas the former is the tension between this theory and my own experience.

The capacity for Whitehead's system to organize vastly different fields of knowledge is not an accident. Whitehead set out to write an "essay in cosmology," as the subtitle to *Process and Reality* indicates. As such, the theory would need to describe the fundamental nature of the universe. To the degree to which it is successful it should be capable of organizing and explaining *any* given aspect of reality. (*PR* 4, 5) This would include the essential nature of human beings, whether from the perspective of Christianity or of Gestalt Therapy; or of the many sciences, physical and social; or of the humanities; and so on. And, if as Whitehead asserts, the notion of the creative advance, of creativity, "is that ultimate notion of the highest generality at the base of actuality," (*PR* 47) then the system which describes this should not inhibit this advance, but promote it. This is true for me with his system: it is a lure for further integrations within the system and among other systems (this is also exceedingly frustrating, for the advance never stops).

Creativity, for Whitehead, "cannot be characterized" (*PR* 47) because it is the notion which ultimately characterizes all other features of reality. Yet, as such, "creativity is always found under conditions, and described as conditioned," (*PR* 47) and therefore known only through specific actuality. This concrete actuality is what will be detailed in the next section as the "actual occasions" or "actual entities" found in the world. These actual occasions, in their true individuality," are the final real things" (*PR* 27) of reality, indivisible in fact though not in analysis. (Cf., *PR* 27-28) While they are becoming actual (the process of concrescence) they are what we know as *subject*. Indeed, a special instance of these occasions is what we know to be our experiencing, here-and-now self. This is called variously the dominant (reigning, or presiding) occasion or the final percipient (cf., *PR* 164, 166-67). As subject, the occasion can be described as *perceiving* the world, as well as *feeling* the world (the two words are closely related, independent of Whitehead's usage). In perception one has a slightly more "tangible" view of what it is like to be an experiencing subject, experiencing the world.

### 5. *Meaning of "Process"*

The final feature for this introduction is a closer look at the term "process." My experience in explaining Whitehead's thought to others is that this term is one of the initial barriers, so that it is important to be generally clear what the notion means for Whitehead.

The word itself means, literally, a "going forward." As such, the larger meaning conveyed by the term includes the notion of change. Another way to approach this term is through language. As noted in the introduction, Gestalt Therapy emphasizes the gerund ("-ing") form of verbs (doing, acting, tensing, and so on). The emphasis is on "events" happening in contrast with "things" (substance in static, unchangeable definiteness). This, the objective side of reality, is not at all ignored by Whitehead; he simply views this as having been created through a process of becoming. This process of becoming--concrescence--results in the things we know as objects. Yet the becoming is intimately or inherently related to these past things; this is the difference between subject (in process of becoming) and object (what exists following the process of becoming).

How substance emerges from the process of becoming is one of the major uses of "process" for Whitehead, and is the focus of the next section. In this section there will be an outline of how one can arrive at the world we perceive, the world we know, full of earth and sky, plants and animals,as well as trolls and other imaginative monsters; and feelings of joy and pain.

In addition to concrescence being a process of becoming, it is also a process of inheritance from the past. A subject becomes by means of its feelings of past occasions which were once subject. There is, therefore, a second process being described, wherein what is to be is essentially related to what now is in the past. The other direction of this process is oriented toward the future, where the becoming subject points itself beyond what it is to be for itself. This is the superjective (literally, "thrown beyond") nature of the subject, where it becomes an object with its own intentions for future subjects.

Process, in other words, is of the essence of reality, and is another way of defining the creative advance. Now let us examine this more closely in terms of the process of the becoming subject.

## B. MAJOR CONCEPTS OF CONCRESCENCE

This section will move from a discussion of the actual occasion which becomes to a description of the phases of its becoming. This will be followed by a review of some of the forms in which these occasions may be grouped and of some of the principles governing this process.

### 1. *Actual Occasion*

An actual occasion, also called an actual entity, has been previously described as the final real thing in the universe. (*PR* 27) As such, it cannot by definition be further divided, except in (for example) an analytical description. In other words, the description in this dissertation of various phases and their dynamics does not mean that these units can, in reality, be so dissected. Yet this analytical dissection is important for understanding how the system can account for all features of reality, from God to human beings to rocks to subatomic particles. All of these features are comprised of these actual occasions or actual entities. (The terms mean the same, basically; the difference is one of emphasis, and will not be elaborated here). Though these actual entities "differ among themselves," at base in terms of their principles they are "all alike" as the "final facts" of reality. (*PR* 28) They "are drops of experience, complex and interdependent." (*PR* 28) Hence, as the facts of reality, they really are reality; as entities which come into being, they are process. They are the process by which the really real is created: *process (becoming) and reality (what has become)*.

a. *The end is in the beginning.* One of the most important features, and one that is inherently difficult to grasp, is that *an actual occasion does not become within time* ("the genetic process is not the temporal succession"). (*PR* 434) In becoming, an occasion enjoys a certain "quantum of physical" time (*PR* 434) but it is not *in* time. In a sense, it uses up or consumes time by becoming, but this is *not* to be understood as meaning that this becoming occurs across time--that, for example, each phase of the process of becoming is *temporally* successive. Whitehead's view of the relationship between an occasion and time means that *all* of the specific dynamics to be described later as the various phases of concrescence are best viewed as "omnipresent": each dynamic is present from the beginning to the end of the process of becoming. "Each phase in the genetic process presupposes the entire quantum, and so does each feeling in each phase." (*PR* 434) This means that any seemingly separate dynamic of concrescence is not in reality separate; this is the result of the method of description.

Not only does one dynamic influence another, but it is clear from the description of the phases of concrescence (developed later), as well as the principle described above, that dynamics in their various *groupings* influence each other (singly and in groups). This means, for example, that the end--at which the subject aims--is present and influential from the beginning. (Cf., *PR* 339, 342) This also means, for confusion or clarity, that each phase from the simplest to the most complex is present or influential at every other phase. Thus, what is described for the highest phases of becoming in a complex occasion can be seen as operating in the primary phases.

This becomes increasingly important in this dissertation in the final portions (cf. Chapter 5) where an integration of the material presented from Gestalt Therapy and from Whitehead is attempted. In particular, this has reference for Gestalt Therapy as a re-definition of the middle mode of the self, or at least a clarification. The middle mode can be more clearly seen as a process of relating the two "primary" modes (id and ego) all the way along, instead of simply at the end. A variation of this theme also helps make the shift in scale from a single actual occasion to the large number of them involved in the formation of a gestalt while still retaining the essential dynamics of a single occasion (in a surprisingly similar order). One can be conscious of a primary phase of one's experience at the highest phase of one's experience. (Cf., *PR* 83) This is true even though consciousness as such does not occur except with this complex phase for a sophisticated occasion.

Just as the end is in the beginning, the beginning is in the end, including in consciousness.

b. *Subject is self-created*. Another important principle that Whitehead affirms is the understanding that each becoming subject ultimately determines its own creation. It is self-caused in the final analysis (and, of course, from the beginning; see the previous discussion). Yet at the same time, the occasion is influenced by other (past) occasions, so that the notion of causality as an inherent part of reality is also affirmed. *Whitehead, in other words, upholds both the notion of causality (other-determination) and freedom (self-determination) within a single entity, and within all entities*. This is also described by Whitehead as the difference between *efficient causation and final causation*. (Cf., *PR* 228-29) In the initial phases of concrescence, the subject is "thrown under"[3] or influenced by the past. In the "later" (higher) phases of concrescence, the subject in turn defines itself in its own way. The final determination of what it is to become is up to itself. The first is efficient causation and the second is final causation. (This has been discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to Gestalt Therapy's concepts of responsibility and the difference between self-support and self-regulation.)

This distinction also corresponds to the difference between the *physical and mental "poles"* of the occasion. The initial phase of becoming is the physical pole where the past is experienced as definite, concrete fact. The mental pole--which encompasses the later or supplemental phases--is where the subject creates itself out of what it has taken in in the initial phase.

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[3] This is the literal meaning of "sub-ject."

c. *Subject and object.* At the physical pole of the occasion, the subject is causally influenced by the past. At this phase of experience the subject "feels" the objects (which are by definition the past); the subject feels these as *settled* facts. At its mental pole, the subject through a variety of processes takes its conforming feelings and refashions them. Once this latter process is completed, the subject is fully unified, and the process of becoming is completed. The subject then, as subject, perishes. At this point, it is now object, available for future becoming subjects. *Whitehead, therefore, affirms the subjective and objective sides of reality, assigning these states again to the single entity.* The difference between subject and object is the difference between becoming and being (or finishing having become). Another way to see this distinction, useful for integrating the notion of an actual occasion with the notion of a gestalt, is that while becoming the occasion is the active integrator of its parts; and once it has become, it is an integrated or unified whole. The occasion is both a whole being organized and an organized whole.

d. *Subject and prehensions.* What the subject organizes or integrates are its feelings or *prehensions*. These are feelings of past subjects (now objects). These feelings of the past occasions are what make up the occasion, and are what are finally integrated into a single, complex feeling at the point the occasion completes itself. *What* the becoming *subject feels are* those *settled feelings within the past occasions*. One occasion's feelings are the "target" of another occasion's feelings. The becoming subject prehends or grasps a past object by virtue of one of the object's own feelings. (The past object, of course, is no longer feeling; its own feelings are settled in place, so to speak, yet they are available to be felt by becoming or future subjects.) The feelings in the past object are, of course, feelings of additional past objects' feelings (these are "past" relative to this object). One can see that prehensions create a chain of connectedness or "togetherness" (cf., *PR* 29) throughout reality. (Additional features of prehensions will be developed elsewhere, particularly in the discussion on the stages of concrescence.)

e. *Subject-superject*. This chain of connectedness, this essential relatedness, moves forward in time as well. The subject has an aim at what it wants to become. This aim is present throughout concrescence, yet becomes fully and finally realized only at the occasion's completion. An essential part of this aim is what the subject wants to become for future occasions. This is the *superjective* nature of occasions. An occasion becomes for itself and by itself, yet it also becomes for other, future subjects as well. It "throws" itself beyond itself,[4] into the future. (See also the later material on *physical purposes*.) Intentionality exists not simply *within* an occasion (its aim), but *between* occasions as well (the superjective nature).

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[4] This is basically the literal meaning of "super-ject."

f. *Essential relatedness and separateness.* A subject becomes by virtue of its feelings of the past with an aim toward the future. As discussed above, this shows the essential relatedness of actuality. Yet occasions are also essentially separate. This is illustrated by the difference in function between the physical and mental poles, and the difference between efficient and final causation. A third way to see this is with Whitehead's principle that *contemporary becoming occasions do not feel each other*. The *only* feelings a subject has are of past occasions--of objects, in other words. A becoming subject receives or feels the total past, yet it becomes totally alone.

Whitehead describes this in a variety of ways, including in terms of private and public, and the one and the many. While becoming, the occasion is private; once become it is public. (Cf., *PR* 229, 443ff) The many occasions of the past become folded together into the one becoming occasion, which in turn becomes one among the many for future occasions.

Yet our own experience tells us, as does Gestalt Therapy, that we are aware of the present, as well as in the present, and aware of other seemingly present subjects in our own present awareness. By definition, however, we cannot truly experience another contemporary subject. Whitehead accounts for this seeming paradox in his theory of perception by means of the perceptual mode of *presentational immediacy*. As experiencing, perceiving subjects, we "project" out onto the contemporary world a clear view of the past we have received. (See Chapter 3 on presentational immediacy.) When the objects are close at hand (like this piece of paper) there is no significant problem. When they are as distant as stars, we can be significantly in error as to their actual contemporary nature. In a sense, the actual facts when compared with our "theory" about those facts is where the error becomes known.

g. *Conclusion.* This discussion about some of the features of the nature of an actual occasion paves the way to much of the discussion that follows. The one major feature in the following that has yet to be developed is the role of eternal objects, the pure possibilities fully realized in actuality. With that exception, the following is largely an extension and elaboration of what has been covered under the heading of an actual occasion. Additionally, the next section on the dominant or presiding occasion helps make all of this, hopefully, relevant to our own experience in an immediate sense.

### 2. *Dominant Occasion*

There have been a number of references to the fact that a human being--the human body--is dominated or ruled over by one kind of actual occasion. As mentioned, this occasion is termed (variously) the dominant, presiding, reigning, and so forth. While following the general principles for all occasions, it has some unique features of its own. These are elaborations from the principles exemplified in all occasions. Just how this kind of occasion exists in the body is a complex discussion which, though highly intriguing in its full consideration, will be abbreviated here with a focus on points of strong relevance for Gestalt Therapy.

a. *The dominant occasion as our "self."* One point which helped to bring Whitehead's system home to me was the realization that we "live inside" an actual occasion. Our self-aware experiencing is what it is for us to be an actual occasion. We can be aware of features of our world and of ourselves. "Our self-consciousness is direct awareness of ourselves as such" occasions. (*PR* 164) This feature ties the dominant occasion directly to the Gestalt Therapy view of the self. All the features of an actual occasion, previously and yet to be discussed, are exemplified by our "self."

b. *The dominant occasion as a "living person."* Technically, our self is called a "living person." As with all terms, concepts, and phrases in Whitehead's system, these two words become packed with meaning. To explain "life" and "living" in their fullest sense is a portion of that intriguing discussion mentioned earlier, for this involves a consideration of what separates the inorganic world from the organic. One of the important features is the presence or absence of originality in the mental pole. (The principles behind originality are discussed in the following section on eternal objects, the pure possibilities of the universe.) If an aggregate of actual occasions (in this case a *society*) contains within it a dependent sub-group of occasions (a *nexus* in this case) in which *each* member of the sub-group includes this originality *and* this sub-group of occasions reigns over the larger society--then the society is termed "living," and the sub-group (the nexus) is termed "entirely living." (*PR* 157) (A society has, in a sense, more order than does a nexus; a nexus is a broader classification than a society.)

It follows from the above that "life" is a highly unique feature of reality, and a feature which involves originality in a dominant role. Life, in a true sense, "is the name for originality," (*PR* 160) and therefore for "intensity" of experience. (*PR* 160) This is then tied to the self.

The other word in the original definition was "person." Here Whitehead is referring to the special kind of "society" that we are. A society in his system may consist of either or both spatial and temporal organization. A "person" is a society which has only temporal organization; it is a single series of occasions temporally succeeding each other. This "living person" exists within the (non-social) entirely living nexus, which in turn exists within the larger society (in this case, our body). That is, "a living nexus, though non-social in virtue of its 'life,' may support a thread of personal order along some historical route of its members. Such an enduring entity is a 'living person.'" (*PR* 163)

This living person (the "thread of personal order" created by the succession of our self at each moment) is quite special. Its "defining characteristic" is this originality passed from occasion to occasion. (*PR* 163) This is conveyed by what are called "hybrid prehensions." (These will be discussed again in the phases of concrescence.) A hybrid prehension is the feeling of one or another kind of feeling in the *mental* pole of a past occasion; for the subject, the hybrid feeling arises in its own physical pole where feelings conform to the given. In other words, what defines this living person is "conformally" feeling the elements of mental originality in its predecessor. *This has the effect of emphasizing both originality (life) and tradition (inheritance)* *for the dominant occasion*: "In this way originality is both 'canalized' . . . and intensified. . . . Thus life turns back into society: it binds originality within bounds, and gains the massiveness due to reiterated character." (*PR* 163)

c. *The dominant occasion and the body*. The body in Whitehead's scheme is intimately important to this dominant occasion. For one thing, the "non-social nexus" which includes this "living person" (the series of dominant occasions) needs the society of the animal body in order to survive (cf., *PR* 157). Without the body, the self could not exist. For another, the body and the self are intimately intertwined. Each influences the other. The dominant occasion inherits its experience from the body. The body provides the most important ground because it is the "most intimately relevant part" of reality which is influential in its becoming. (*PR* 100). In turn, the superjective nature of the dominant occasion influences the body: "Owing to the delicate organization of the body, there is a returned influence, an inheritance of character derived from the presiding occasion and modifying the subsequent occasions through the rest of the body." (*PR* 166)

This shows more clearly how the presiding occasion can be considered as dominant. The dominant occasion is also termed the "final node, or intersection" (*PR* 166) of the streams of occasions which make up the body. It receives or inherits from these streams of incoming influence; it has available all of these streams, also called "a complex structure of many enduring objects." (*PR* 166-67) Important for Gestalt Therapy's emphasis on the inherent relationship between the body and the self is the understanding that this complex structure "pervades the human body." (*PR* 167) *This structure which pervades is, in a full sense, the combination of the body and the self.*

Also important for Gestalt Therapy is Whitehead's view that the dominant occasion receives from, and initially is defined by, the most intense or richest experience of the moment: "Finally, the brain is co-ordinated so so that a peculiar richness of inheritance is enjoyed now by this and now by that part; and thus there is produced the presiding personality at that moment in the body." (*PR* 166) *Our self is to be found where there is the most intense or interesting experience; this acute richness defines the self.*

Yet, the dominant occasion is not really in firm control; control, as it exists, is precarious, as is unity: "There are limits to such unified control . . . ."(*PR* 164) "But central personal dominance is only partial, and in pathological cases is apt to vanish." (*PR* 167) Thus, the unity which is primary and worked for in Gestalt Therapy is not necessarily a given, nor can it be expected to always exist, or to have once existed in some golden age of the person only to be divided by a cruel environment. No doubt this happens, but also important is the fact that *this unity grows throughout one's life.*

d. *The dominant occasion and "contrasts."* A "contrast" for Whitehead can be relatively easily understood from the perspective of Gestalt Therapy. A contrast, in essence, is the figure-ground whole of vivid or contrasting elements. It is powerful opposites held together in a single whole, so that neither loses its own uniqueness, yet each is included. This tension results in "intensity of experience," over against the "inhibition of opposites" where experience has diminished intensity. (*PR* 167) The function of the dominant occasion in the context of the body is to "adjust" these inhibitions of opposites "into contrasts of opposites," which results in "intensity of experience." (*PR* 167) This relates to the emphasis in Gestalt Therapy on going with the most intense portion of a person's experience. This also relates to the understanding that two poles of a given response (the so-called split) need to be integrated in such a way that the essential worth of each side of the split finds a place in the final integration. From the perspective of therapy, if one or the other side is eliminated, then the one that is included (foreground) is diminished, and the whole person is thereby diminished; they are "not all there." (Cf., *GA*) And the excluded side continues to demand entrance into full awareness. The goal in therapy is to balance this demand for inclusion with the other demand to stay, and for neither side to annihilate the opposite.

e. *The dominant occasion and the present--and perception.* The dominant occasion clearly "lives" in the present:

> The characteristic of life is reaction adapted to the capture of intensity, under a large variety of circumstances. But the reaction is dictated by the present and not by the past. It is the clutch at vivid immediacy. (*PR* 160)

Life in this context refers to the living person, the dominant occasion. The present includes also the mental pole, the principle of final causation and, as shown in Chapter 3, the perceptual mode of presentational immediacy. This is the "clutch at vivid immediacy." The past, on the other hand, enters into the subject through the physical pole, the principle of efficient causation, and the perceptual mode of causal efficacy. As indicated by inclusion of the perceptual modes, the self is also the perceiver--the "final percipient." This will be expanded later.

Life--the dominant occasion, the self--is lived for human beings in the immediate present, the here-and-now of Gestalt Therapy. This is the peak of life, and it is the greatest achievement of reality to be thus. This is where there is the greatest intensity, which is what God aims at each moment: "God's purpose in the creative advance is the evocation of intensities." (*PR* 161) In our dominant occasion, living most fully at the present, God has the potential for the most intense experience; it is God's aim to receive this, and this aim therefore shapes God's initial aim for each of us each moment of becoming.

### 3. *Eternal Objects*

Whitehead's system includes another class of objects. These are termed "eternal" and they are *all* the pure possibilities which *are or can be* fully and only realized in actuality--in actual occasions. An actual occasion is defined by some of these pure possibilities, both in terms of its final, complex *subjective form*, but also in terms of its relations to other occasions. As pure possibilities, they have no reference to any particular actuality, yet are potential for all actuality. They are the potential for the specific determination of fact; and when an occasion has completed becoming, it is specifically determined by these eternal objects being fully realized in the occasion's unique fashion (its unique subjective form).

a. *Eternal objects and God.* Eternal objects are quite important for

Whitehead's system in general, as well as for showing the centrality of God in the process of reality. Eternal objects are *all* felt and ordered by God in God's *primordial nature*. For God, the phases of becoming are reversed. The appreciation of pure possibilities is the primary phase of concrescence. The feeling of the *actuality* is the second phase. For God this is termed the *consequent nature*. In this phase, God feels the entire universe of actual occasions as they have really become; God knows our individual actuality in the context of all of actuality. In the third phase, essentially the *superjective*, God "weaves" the first two phases together, and offers to *each* becoming subject its *initial* and *ideal aim* as to what it could become. The ideal is in reference to the ideal order of eternal objects. God, in other words, seeks to have this ideal order of all pure possibilities fully realized, made fully determinant in the actual world. This would provide God with the most intense satisfaction possible.

The feeling by a becoming actual occasion *within* the universe (called "temporal" in relation to God's non-temporal nature) of God's initial aim is in the subject's conformal (physical) phase; this is termed a "hybrid" physical feeling. (A hybrid feeling is of either a conceptual feeling in a past subject, or of another one of the mental feelings. A conceptual feeling is a feeling of eternal objects, a so-called pure mental feeling.)

b. *Eternal objects, subjective form, and objectification.* The initial aim of the subject is for the realization of a given subjective form. Eternal objects are also the means by which a past occasion is objectified. In the second phase of concrescence, these forms inherent in these past facts are appreciated in their "purity"--as pure potentials once again. This phase is the origin (for temporal occasions) of the mental pole, and is critical for the higher phases of concrescence. In the phase of conceptual feelings, the subject appreciates these eternal objects which have been fully realized as the determinative definiteness of the given facts felt conformally in the physical phase of concrescence. This is also termed "appetition" by Whitehead, an intriguing term which intuitively suggests a link with the de-structuring process which occurs during the process of taking in and assimilating "food" (as described by Gestalt Therapy; see Chapters 2 and 5).

In the higher or more complex phases, these eternal objects are recombined with the originally felt facts in various ways in order to produce the kind of experience which occurs within an actual occasion, including human awareness in its various forms. As understanding the ways in which an eternal object may function is important for both the theory of concrescence and for the integration of this with the theory of perception, I will outline this more explicitly below.

c. *The three modes of ingression of an eternal object.* (See *PR* 445-46.) There are three ways in which pure possibilities may be ingressed into actual occasions. 1) An eternal object may be an element of definiteness in the *objectified actual occasion* (or objectified nexus if transmutation is involved). 2) It may be an element of definiteness in the *subjective form* of an actual occasion. 3) "It can be an element in the datum of a conceptual, or a propositional, feeling." (*PR* 445)

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(There are also two species of eternal objects, the objective and the subjective. These will not be explored explicitly here.)

The *first mode* of ingression involves relationship. This mode of ingression is how one occasion (say, the object) is related to another occasion (say, the subject). The subject *objectifies* the past occasion by means of one of the past occasion's eternal objects.

The *second mode* of ingression involves subjective form. This is the subject's internal feeling; it is *how* the subject feels what it is feeling. The subject, for example, feels a feeling in a past occasion in a certain way. The subject may feel the past feeling with a certain emotion, a certain intensity, with valuation up or down, with pain or pleasure, even with consciousness. All of these are the subjective form, or *how* the subject feels whatever it is feeling.

From this it should be clear that an eternal object can have a two-way mode of functioning: "The eternal object can then function both subjectively and relatively. It can be a private element in a subjective form, and also an agent in the objectification." (*PR* 446) This understanding becomes important later in the integration of concrescence with perception, particularly in the discussion of the relationship between *sensa* and eternal objects. (Sensa, defined as eternal objects, also have this same two-way mode of functioning--subjective and relational.)

The *third mode* of ingression has importance for understanding the nature of conceptual feelings and propositional feelings. Conceptual feelings are feelings of the pure potentials (eternal objects) in their unqualified purity. In this case, the eternal objects are not felt as determinate of any actual occasion, but as potentially determinate of any actual occasion. The eternal object, however, is felt with valuation: up (adversion) or down (aversion). Propositional feelings involve feelings of eternal objects as partially pure and partially impure; or partially indeterminate and partially determinate. They are felt as a possibility for a selected group of facts (which themselves are felt as not fully actual). In this third mode of ingression, then, eternal objects are felt as either pure *or* partially pure (conceptually or propositionally felt, respectively). This "is a real ingression into actuality; but it is a restricted ingression with mere potentiality withholding the immediate realization of its function of conferring definiteness." (*PR* 445)

The first two modes of ingression are the ways in which an "eternal object is unrestrictedly realized." (*PR* 445) The third mode is simply the "withholding" of this full realization, or (in a sense) the preliminary to the other two modes.

d. *Eternal object illustrated.* For sake of illustration, let us take the emotion of anger. As an emotion, it is an eternal object. Anger is a pure possibility which can be realized in any given occasion and says nothing by itself about the occasions in which it might be realized.

1. One person feels angry. As this person is feeling angry--as a feeling subject--the anger is part or all of the subject's form. It is an eternal object of the subjective species functioning in the second (subjective) mode of ingression.

2. A second person feels the first person's anger. The first

person's anger is an element of definiteness by which he or she is objectified by the second person. The eternal object can be seen as functioning in two ways, both relationally and subjectively.

3. The second person, at least at the initial or purely physical phase of their experience, feels the first person's anger angrily (i.e., conformally). The second person, however, may feel the anger of the other person with a different subjective form, in this case, with a different emotion. Instead of anger, they may feel the first person's anger with a feeling of peace or a feeling of love. At the least, the second person may entertain the possibility of feeling the other person's anger in a different fashion. In this case this would involve the third mode of ingression.

## PART TWO: PHASES OF CONCRESCENCE

The prior section of the first part of this chapter has described a number of details related to the nature of an actual occasion, the dominant occasion (a special form of an actual occasion), and eternal objects. This section will attempt to bring these details into more of a dynamic relationship, particularly the relationship between subject and object as this relates to the actual process of concrescence. (The subject is the becoming actual occasion, and the objects involved are past occasions and eternal objects.)

*The dynamics of concrescence are really the key to this dissertation*. Virtually all of the interpretations and integrations on both sides of this section--from Chapter 1 to the end--are influenced, if not directly ordered, by this description of the dynamics of concrescence.

There are perhaps a number of ways to summarize this process. In one sense, Whitehead spent most of *Process and Reality* doing this. Sherburne, in his *Key* to *PR*, edited this down to about 36 pages; however, his version contains some serious errors of interpretation.[5] Despite this his attempt is still of value, and has influenced this present development significantly. His analysis of the concrescent process into phases provided the starting point for this present interpretation, though there are significant modifications.

## A. PHASES AS A CREATED "PATHWAY" THROUGH CONCRESCENCE

Seeing the process of concrescence as a collection of phases is really a *created* pathway to the understanding of the dynamics involved. As there are problems with this particular path, some of the features about the nature of this trail should be noted at the start. These features are summarized in the points below:

1. The first thing to keep clearly in mind is that this path is being created by persons other than Whitehead. There are some natural features in *PR* which help suggest this path, yet the path does not fully cover the terrain. It is merely one perspective by which to view selected--yet hopefully representative--features.

2. The word "phase"[6] means *appearance*. The particular phase of

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[5] Sherburne tends to describe a subject as feeling its own feelings. Subjects can only feel objects. He also distorts the phases by picturing them as sequential.

[6] The word "phase" is preferable to "stage" (a term also used by Whitehead). Stage means stopping place, place to stand. A stage in this sense happens only once--when the occasion is fully completed.

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concrescence is defined by the appearance, in relatively unique groups, of certain features in the becoming subject.

3. To some degree the pathway is drawn across those groups of features that do not repeat themselves in exactly the same way in other phases. The same features may be involved in more than one phase; the particular group in each phase, though, is uniquely organized.

4. These phases can be seen as involving each other in such a way that one can discuss development from phase to phase in a *limited* but fair way.

5. The limits are: a) Each phase "presupposes" the entire concrescent process; in the general sense of the entire subject, all phases "appear" together. b) A subject cannot feel aspects of itself; subjects can feel only objects (which are by definition not subjects).

6. These two limits stem from the view of time described by Whitehead (which is part of the theory of relativity). Time is relative to and defined by the subject. A subject is always in the present when becoming; objects (concluded subjects and eternal objects) are not in the present.

7. This also means that contemporary subjects cannot feel each other. Though one cannot feel what is in the present, one can speculate about it, in some cases with great accuracy, as well as with great imagination.

8. Since a subject cannot be looked at by a contemporary, we can examine only objects--that is, we can analyze subjects only from the perspective of their conclusion (at their "satisfaction").

9. Among other things, this "outcome" analysis reveals that

the subject-object relationship is not complete with just the understanding that subjects feel objects. Objects relate themselves in a special sense toward subjects. Objects *cause* the subject; and this causal intention was formed when the object was itself a subject.

10. This causal intention on the part of the object involves the occasion's purposive nature. The occasion has a purpose for the future (which may or may not be realized). The occasion as subject throws its influence "beyond" itself as it "perishes" (the point of satisfaction). This is the superjective nature of the subject.

## B. PHASES OF CONCRESCENCE: OVERVIEW

These 10 points show several things about the nature and dynamics of concrescence. The path is partially described. The understanding of "phase" described above should make it clear that what is and what is not deemed a phase can vary with which group of appearances is being discussed.

### *Seven Phases*

All of the following are phases in the general sense of "appearance of features in a relatively unique group":

1. The phase of physical feelings.
2. The phase of conceptual feelings.
3. The phase of physical purposes.
4. The phase of propositional feelings.
5. The phase of intellectual feelings.
6. The entire subject.

7. The satisfaction of the subject's becoming.

The path involves all of these, though more primarily numbers one through five. In addition to these, there are other features that can be abstracted from some of what are listed above as phases. These "sub-phases" are numerous. The most definitely discussed here are (1) the two sub-phases of initial data and objective datum in the phase of physical feelings, (2) the sub-phase of valuation (up or down) in the phase of conceptual feelings, and (3) the sub-phases of conceptual reiteration and reversion in the phase of conceptual feelings.

Phases one through five (physical through intellectual feelings) are the primary focus; yet phase four (propositional feelings) is of a slightly different nature. It is in a sense both subordinate and superior to the others; but it is not as equal to the others as they are to each other. This can be understood as follows:

1. The phases of physical and conceptual feelings (1 and 2) are the primary feelings which are integrated. In one sense, these are the only two kinds of feelings. All others are elaborations of these and their combinations.

2. The phases of physical purposes and intellectual feelings (3 and 5) are two kinds of conclusions to concrescence. These are two kinds of "final forms" for a subject, and are two ways in which the two primary kinds of feelings may be compared.

3. Propositional feelings are intermediate between physical purposes and intellectual feelings. (Cf., *PR* 427) By themselves, propositional feelings cannot define the conclusion of an occasion. They must be included as an ingredient (along with the physical feeling

of the original fact) in an intellectual feeling; an intellectual feeling is defined as a comparison between a proposition and a fact. This defines their so-called subordinate nature.

Yet, intellectual feelings are not possible without propositional feelings (see the last paragraph). Moreover, as a formal and unique dynamic, the proposition (the object of the propositional feeling) can be described as either defining or being included in the definition of a number of different features of the occasion. These include the subject itself (in process of concrescence), the perceptual mode of presentational immediacy, and several features of God. This indicates the so-called superior nature of propositions and propositional feelings.

### *Definition of Phases 1-5*

Before proceeding further, it may be helpful to have a brief definition of phases 1-5. These definitions are not the complete elaboration of these phrases, but they will provide an initial basis for understanding.

1. *Phase of physical feelings*. This phase is defined as the physical (and conformal) feeling by the subject of past actual occasions. Such a feeling may be *pure or hybrid*. A *pure* physical feeling has as its object another physical feeling in a past occasion. This is the feeling in one physical pole of a feeling in another physical pole. A *hybrid* physical feeling has as its object a feeling in the mental pole of another occasion. Such a feeling can be a conceptual feeling of a past occasion or the initial aim offered by God.

2. *Phase of conceptual feelings*. This phase is defined as the conceptual feeling of an eternal object or pure possibility. This feeling corresponds in some way to the pure possibility which is fully realized in the object of the subject's physical feeling. This feeling may be of the same pure possibility; or of one that is relevant to the original eternal object, yet also different to some extent. (This conceptual counterpart holds for both pure and hybrid physical feelings.)

3. *Phase of physical purpose*. This phase involves a comparison between feelings from the two primary phases. Here the feelings of the two basic kinds of objects are compared, then fully rejoined. The pure possibility may be enhanced or diminished, as well as identical or relevantly different; but it loses its fully indeterminate status (as a pure possibility) and is completely reunited with the original fact.

4. *Phase of propositional feelings*. A propositional feeling feels a proposition. A proposition includes the comparison of the original fact with a pure possibility; however, neither the fact nor the possibility is felt in its fullness. What is actually compared is a reduced fact and a reduced possibility. The fact loses its status as a complete actuality; the possibility loses its status as a purely general condition for any given actuality. The fact becomes an "it" capable of being joined with a possibility other than the one realized in it; and the possibility becomes tied to this particular "it." Each "suffers" a partial elimination of its true or full nature as experienced in the primary physical and conceptual phases. A proposition may be understood, then, as theory (a possibility about an abstract group of facts,

or a single fact).

5. *Phase of intellectual feelings.* This phase compares a proposition about a fact (singular or in a group) with the original fact. This feeling takes the theory and compares it with the actual datum (or data). It is only at this phase that one has consciousness (or awareness; cf., *PR* 371-72).

## C. PHASES OF CONCRESCENCE: DETAILED

With these brief descriptions in mind, it will be possible to proceed with a more detailed description of the five phases.

### 1. *Phase of Physical Feelings*

The subject conformally feels past occasions, as well as God's initial aim, in this phase. As mentioned, there are two sub-phases that one can abstract from this phase. The experience of the entire universe of actual occasions as the *initial data* for the subject's concrescence is the first sub-phase. Alternatively, this may be seens as the entire universe causing the subject. (This latter stems from the superjective nature of occasions.) The becoming subject, however, does not directly include all of the available universe of facts. Some are excluded by means of *negative prehensions*. Those facts included are done so by means of *positive prehensions,* also called *feelings*. That which is included can be considered the *objective datum*; this is the second sub-phase. It is by means of one feeling in a past occasion that the whole occasion is known or *objectified*.

What is excluded, however, leaves its impression upon the final or resulting occasion: "the negative prehensions which effect the elimination are not merely negligible . . . [but] contribute to the process." (*PR* 346) The occasion

> retains the impress of what it might have been, but is not. It is for this reason that what an actual entity has avoided . . . may yet be an important part of its equipment. (*PR* 346)
>
> Negative prehensions may eliminate [a past entity's] distinctive importance. But in some way, by some trace of causal feeling, the remote actual entity is prehended positively. . . . Actualities *have* to be felt . . . . (*PR* 366)

This "have to" refers to the feeling of the total given as the *initial data*.

Objectification, as mentioned, is what is actually *included within* the subject; it is the feeling by which the past occasion is "known" to the subject. This is also the *perspective* of the given held by the subject. This objectified feeling is an abstraction from the whole past occasion. By virtue of the principle of *subjective unity* (whereby the subject in its becoming is ultimately one complex and unified feeling) this abstracted feeling includes a "flavor" of the whole from which it has been taken.

This "flavor" (my word) is the sense of the past occasion's final *subjective form*. This is what is taken in "whole" into the becoming occasion. The becoming subject feels the past occasion's feeling as that past occasion felt the feeling. This relates to the notion that these physical feelings in the subject are *conformal feelings*. In this sense, the subject can be seen as conformally feeling not only that past feeling, but by extension the past occasion's subjective form. The conformation may remain in the final subject, or it may be changed to some degree. This depends upon the mental pole of the subject, as well as God.

God is experienced in the first phase as the *subject's initial aim*. By means of God's superjective nature, God offers to the becoming subject its ideal aim for its final subjective form. In this aim, God has taken into account both the entire past and the entire, infinite collection of eternal objects. What it offers the becoming subject are the relevant eternal objects (valued up) which the subject can realize, if it chooses, in its final form.

This initial aim is felt by a hybrid physical feeling. (The pure physical feeling has as its object a feeling of a physical nature in the past occasion.) A hybrid physical feeling is also defined as a feeling of the conceptual feeling of another past actual occasion--which in turn felt an eternal object. God's initial aim is essentially the directing of the subject's feelings toward eternal objects which are most relevant; thus feelings of eternal objects are what define a hybrid physical feeling.

Hybrid physical feelings preserve the novelty realized in the objectified occasion. (A hybrid physical feeling subject to reversion introduces novelty to the inherited novelty.) Note that this conceptuality is experienced by the subject initially in a conformal and a physical fashion. This also can be seen as the *causal experience of mentality*. This means that mentality can enter forcefully into actuality, regardless of reversion.

In order to reach the level of high grade (e.g., human)

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experience, it is necessary to introduce another distinction, that between a *simple* physical feeling and a *complex physical feeling*. A simple feeling is the prehension of but one past actual occasion. A complex physical feeling is the prehension in a special way of a group of actual occasions (termed a nexus or society). This collection of occasions must have some theme in common among its various individual members, some exemplified principle by which they may be organized and perceived as a whole. This involves the principle of *transmutation*. By means of the next (conceptual) phase, the many single occasions which enter into the concrescence of a subject are transformed into a single whole of the order of the objects we see and encounter in our world. This holds true as well for the "mental objects" we encounter within us.

In terms of therapy, the interplay between physical feelings and subjective forms is intriguing. The physical feeling by a therapist of a client (including the subjective forms) would provide the basis of supportive sympathy[7] (conformally feeling the other's experience). The hybrid physical feeling by a client of the therapist's final subjective form would provide the opportunity for change. The therapist first feels the client's feelings as the client feels them--then differently. The therapist might feel a client's fear fearfully--then confidently. This difference, in turn, must be conformally felt and to some extent retained by the client, even if the therapist's novel rendering of the client's original experience is negatively prehended.

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[7] The words sympathy and empathy are confused in current useage. Gestalt Therapy generally prefers empathy over sympathy. However, sympathy in its essential meaning is closer to what Gestalt Therapy is striving to promote--feeling another's feelings as he or she feels them. There is no necessity for the connotation of "pity" sometimes attached to sympathy.

The persistence of subjective forms from entity to entity also would seem to be involved with the passage, for good or evil, from generation to generation of *how* to experience and express the variety of feelings a person can entertain. The style of loving and expressing anger, for example, can be seen as persisting from generation to generation within a family (and no doubt in broader groups as well). This is revealed in family therapy quite clearly. Breaking some of these chains, while enhancing others, can be a central way of defining the task of therapy. (This involves other features of the system of Whitehead, including conceptual feelings, physical purposes, enduring objects, and propositional feelings, as well as the special form of intensification of the present found in intellectual feelings.)

### 2. *Phase of Conceptual Feelings*

The second phase of concrescence is where the subject feels the raw, pure, fully indeterminate nature of the universe--the pure possibilities for any given actuality, with specificity for none. In this sense, eternal objects (and the conceptual experience of them) are negation (and the experience of them the experience of absolute negation). What was totally affirmed in the physical phase is now totally negated (this is actuality vs. possibility in the fullest sense).

(In *some* ways this is like Perls' emphasis on contact and withdrawal. Contact in this sense is with full actuality, the fully real;

and withdrawal is withdrawal to this absolute negation, the terrifying nothingness of truly pure possibility. This cannot be taken too far, though, for Perls also was aiming for the person to have, in withdrawal, contact with their "insides." Yet, even this inner experience, if taken far enough, can lead to the experience of the *via negativa*. Of course, the opposite tack can be taken with similar results.)

These conceptual feelings are derived from the physical feelings in the sense that they are the appreciation by the subject of the forms which are ingressed or immanent in the facts physically felt. In this phase, the eternal object has the *potential* for definiteness or formal determinativeness for *any* given fact, but is the actuality of none. Based on the previous definition of a proposition, it is clear that eternal objects are absolutely necessary for such an entity (and the feelings of this propositional entity).

The eternal object conceptually felt also is valued by God. This *valuation* (according to Whitehead's categoreal obligation IV) may be (1) to *enhance* the importance of this eternal object; or (2) to *diminish or completely eliminate* it from further expression in actuality. (This is, respectively, *ad*version or *a*version.) The valuation is not for the becoming subject alone, for it is never alone; but it is also for the future via the subject's superjective nature. The particular eternal object, and relatedly the fact in which it is expressed, can be said to *endure or not* on the basis of this valuation. Whether it is the entire actual occasion or not depends upon the complexity of the occasion and/or the complexity of the eternal object so valued. Some eternal objects are "greater" than others; that is, there is an infinite level of complexity of eternal objects. One pure possibility may include several others, and in turn be included in still more complex eternal objects. This should make intuitive sense; and it is the basis for order in some ways.

Valuation is one basis for change in this phase. Valuation up (enhancement) is the only way the form may continue in actuality with at least the same intensity; in itself, this is not change, but endurance. Endurance allows for further possibilities of change. Valuation down is the direct change possible in this sub-phase; this is the "lapse into triviality" of which Whitehead speaks. Elimination makes no prediction about what will or will not happen next; simply that this form (in whatever context) will not be continued. The decision for future persistence (adversion) allows for the other kind of change which can happen in the conceptual phase.

The eternal object, if valued up, can be continued in the *same form*, or in a *relatively different form*. This is the difference between conceptual *reiteration* and conceptual *reversion* (the latter is expressed as categoreal obligation V). The "orangeness" of a given object may change from dull to bright; and general idea of color as well as the more specific idea of "orangeness" express the relevance; the degree of brightness is the reversion. This same principle holds for exceptionally complex eternal objects as well as the simplest. This introduces a more profound possibility for change than with valuation. The novelty introduced at this point can be in any direction as long as it is relevant along some theme.

As eternal objects become more complex, it would seem reasonable that they gain in their capacity to include quite complex and radical changes that nonetheless remain relevant. In fact, it would seem that this possibility for increasingly profound changes would accelerate as the complexity increased, in turn adding to the possibility for even greater complexity--an accelerated acceleration. This would involve the relational mode of regression by eternal objects discussed earlier, and would in turn enhance the complexity of the subjective form. Of course, none of this *has* to happen; it is ultimately up to the subject, even though the lure would be in that direction.

It would seem that the tension between the pure possibility felt and the actuality *realized,* particularly for complex occasions like the dominant would be related in part to the experience of *anxiety.* Perls, for example, graphically defined anxiety as "stage fright." That is, dread of the future, fear of the stage prior to the opening of the curtains. In this case, this is dread of the possibilities for the future--ones which *might* be realized. By overly identifying one's self with certain forms of definiteness, new forms are prevented from being actualized. Yet, as Whitehead says, eternal objects (like actual occasions) leave an impression upon the subject even when they are excluded. (See his discussion, for example, of the "penumbra" of possibilities. *PR* 282ff. Similar comments are on pp. 346, 366-67.) In that sense, as well as in the ultimate sense offered by God's perpetual presence, these relevant eternal objects remain an implicit aspect of that occasion. (The difference between actual occasions and eternal objects is that the latter do *not* all have to be felt, whereas the former do as the initial data.)

### 3. *Phase of Physical Purposes*

This phase has actually been approached by the discussion of the previous two phases. The phase of physical purposes involves the comparison and integration of phases 1 and 2. *In a basic way, the phase of physical purposes is the continuance of the original physical feeling through the conceptual phase*--i.e., through valuation and the possibility of reversion. "Purpose" in this case refers in part to the purpose this conceptually modified original physical feeling has for its further role(s), if any, within the becoming subject in the context of the subject's aim for itself in the future. It is in this sense--of the original physical feeling "passing through" the conceptual phase--that one can understand the notion of comparison and integration. This is not the only way, but this is part of the essential meaning of "purpose" as an outcome of the interaction of the first two, primary, phases.

As the superjective nature of a given *feeling* (whether an aspect of the final subject, or the total subject), this purpose becomes all or part of the *subject's* superjective nature. This is part or all of the subject's enduring quality when it has finished becoming and is therefore an object. This physical feeling, exactly the same, or transformed in some way by the initial conceptual phase, persists into the future, into future subjects. It endures; or if aversion (valuation down) occurs, it terminates.

Within the subject, if the subject is becoming one of a sufficiently high grade nature, the original fact (ingressed via the phase of physical feelings) can be taken up for further potential change and integration in subsequent phases *if* it has been valued up. The outcome of the integration of the first two phases can be the subject's completion, or taken up in the phase of propositional feelings as well as the phase of intellectual feelings.

If this phase is included within these higher (more complexly integrated) phases, there are certain features that would be important to know of, in part because they influence these more complex phases and in part because they can be obscured by the layers that are added.

One feature, merely an extension of the interpretation of the relationship between this phase and the two primary phases, is that there is no "indeterminateness" in this type of feeling:

> The physical feeling is feeling a real fact; the conceptual feeling is valuing an abstract possibility. The new datum is the compatibility or incompatibility of the fact as felt with the eternal object as a datum in feeling. (*PR* 421)

The real fact felt continues forward as a potentially complete real fact (or not, depending upon the valuation). Another feature which stems from this is that this level of integration of the two primary phases is present in all actual occasions--even if it is not the whole definition of all actual occasions (in those cases where the occasion involves the more complex phases yet to be discussed).

That all occasions include physical purposes "explains the persistence of the order of nature, and in particular of 'enduring objects.'" (*PR* 421) The order that endures is explained by this phase, present in all. This persistent endurance is obviously part of a person's identity; that is, identity may be defined as persistence of certain dynamics in virtually all moments of existence. Personality may be seen as those enduring contours of response and initiative as expressed in all or specific relationships involving the individual. (See additional remarks in the Appendix.)

Another feature of physical purposes, which defines the two basic kinds, is the presence or absence of conceptual reversion. Up to this point, we have been discussing physical purposes without reversion. In general, assuming adversion and no reversion, the physical feeling received by a subject will be identical with what is sent forward. These "are called physical purposes of the first species" by Whitehead. (*PR* 422) (This is, in essence, an enduring object; a temporally ordered society, for example, would include one or more of these strands. This is true for the body in its "routes" of inheritance such as the nervous system, and so forth,as well as personality traits.)

Those of the *second species* include *reversion*. "Reversions are the conceptions which arise by reason of the lure of contrast, as a condition for intensity of experience." (*PR* 424) In the overall emphasis of intensity, conceptual reversion plays a large role by enlarging the occasion's capacity to include a more complex contrast. This is achieved in its most basic form in physical purposes of the second species.

A *contrast* is the union created by a feeling (within a subject) or a subject itself, where two elements are held together. If these two elements cannot be held together, there is some feature of incompatibility which violates the obligation of subjective unity--i.e., all feelings must be able to be integrated into a single subject; as well as the obligation of subjective harmony (which has to do "with the subjective forms of the conceptual feelings"; *PR* 41). This necessity for a unified and formally harmonious subject is set over against the intention (originating with God) for inclusion of as much intensity as possible. In general, the more complex the unity achieved, the more intense the occasion. Therefore, if through conceptual reversion the occasion is able to hold in a "unity of contrast" what it formerly rejected as incompatible, then both (or all three) obligations are fulfilled. The subsequent occasion, assuming adversion (valuation up) for the conceptual reversion, is a richer occasion than what it originally felt; it is more than its cause. This process can continue indefinitely. There can be increasingly complex contrasts, contrasts of contrasts, and so on. (*PR* 424)

It should be noted that the integration of a reverted conceptual feeling does not exclude the original, according to Whitehead:

> There is now the physical feeling as valued by its integration with the primary conceptual feeling, the integration with the contrasted secondary conceptual feeling, the heightening of the scale of subjective intensity by the introduction of conceptual contrast, and the concentration of this heightened intensity upon the reverted feeling in virtue of its being the novel factor introducing the contrast. (*PR* 425-26)

Furthermore, this reversion (this change which is relevant in the sense of partially identical and partially diverse from the original conceptual feeling) is physically prehended by the next occasion; for the purpose, though changed by the occasion's conceptual phase, is physical in nature. In fact, the contrast of the original conceptual feeling (reiteration) and the partially new feeling (reversion) is itself included in the datum felt by the subsequent occasion. Thus one has identity persisting, yet change persisting as well; and the change is not disjunctive with the constancy, yet it is change. One also has mentality becoming physicality--the conceptual becoming actual. Finally, one has the basis for evolution or development in an "upwards" fashion; for growth which is more than lateral change, but involving the essence of what is meant by maturation (increased complexity) in opposition to only deterioration or decay.

### 4. *Phase of Propositional Feelings*

This phase adds a great deal of richness and complexity to an occasion. Depending upon one's perspective, it is either a "step up" or an avoidance of a "step down" in relationship to the phase of physical purposes.

a. *Propositions, general.* As summarily defined earlier, *a propositional feeling* (of a proposition) *does not involve this complete elimination of indeterminateness of the pure possibility* as is the case with physical purpose. At least *some of this indeterminateness is retained* in the comparison of the conceptual feeling of the eternal object with the physical feeling of the actual occasion. The experience (physical feeling) of the original fact is also correspondingly different than with the phase of physical purposes. *The fact* (say, a nexus perceived as a unity by means of transmutation--i.e., by virtue of one of its themes, such as "tableness") *is not felt in its full actuality.* Its actuality is reduced "to a multiplicity of bare logical subjects." (*PR* 421) In this way, one can see that a proposition is a theory (a given "it" joined with a given possibility of formal organization).

In general, from the above, it may be possible to see what Whitehead means when he calls propositional feelings "a stage[8] of existence intermediate between the purely physical stage and the stage of conscious intellectual operations." (*PR* 427) (Intellectual operations will be detailed later.) Propositions are a unique bridge between actuality and possibility, retaining some of the features of both, yet losing some of the features of both. *Actuality* is more completely affirmed in *physical purposes*; and *possibility* more affirmed in *intellectual feelings*. This last is not fully the case, though, as will be detailed later. It is generally true that the phase of propositional feelings, as part of the conceptual spectrum of phases (the mental pole) is more filled with potential than the phase of physical purposes. As such, these feelings are also "lures" for further feelings--the quest for greater intensity and greater definiteness. This quest leads to the phase of intellectual feelings.

b. *Kinds of propositional feelings, detailed.* This section on propositions will give the general form of propositions, the two major divisions, and the several sub-divisions within those. Not all of this detail will be used in this dissertation; however, this lays the groundwork for general discussion concerning the differences and similarities between propositional feelings and the perceptive mode of presentational immediacy. This detail also is part of the "pointing beyond" nature of the primary purpose of this dissertation. In addition, these various kinds of propositional feelings find correspondence in intellectual feelings; and also suggest the potential for Whitehead's system to handle the variety of human experience in significant detail if the various possible permutations are worked through.

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[8] Note that Whitehead uses the word "stage" here instead of "phase"; this has perhaps unfortunate connotations, as was dealt with earlier.

A proposition is a statement about something, including an assertion or a judgment. For example, "The sky is blue." Or, Chicken Little's imaginative assertion: "The sky is falling!" One proposition is more clearly "perceptive," while the other is more clearly "imaginative."

When analyzed, a proposition can be seen to include a subject and a predicate. The predicate may be seen as the form that the subject takes in the proposition. In the proposition that "the sky is blue," the quality "blue" is the form organizing the subject "sky"; of course, the perception of "sky" is itself a proposition, and an important one for illustration of the nature of a propositional feeling. Behind the word "sky," is the statement, "That is sky." In this case, the subject is "that," which is the "multiplicity of bare logical subjects" referred to above. This "that" is without any definition, yet it is the actuality defined by the predicate "skyness." For example, one "that" may be sky; another "that" may be earth; and still another may be water. The "it" is a region of some sort which illustrates those formal properties; whether a contemporary region or some other sort. Whatever sort it may be, it is originally derived from actuality, from a nexus of actual occasions which have been reduced in the fullness of their actuality.

As with all theories, there is no inherent truth or falsity to a proposition. A proposition may be true or false, but this is only known when the proposition is compared with the full actuality. This occurs in the phase of intellectual feelings. A propositional feeling is a direct experience (unlike the intellectual). That is, a propositional feeling is a direct feeling of the actual world in the form of a proposition. It is only when this special kind of object is compared with full actuality that one can determine whether or not the perception is "correct"; theory plus actual data equals determination of truth. If, however, one of the major functions of a proposition is as a lure for feeling, then the more imaginative (untrue when compared with fact) may be by far the more interesting--if not the more dangerous. A child seeing a shadow may form a proposition: "That is a monster! That's Darth Vader; he's going to get me!" The child may respond accordingly, fleeing, full of fear over a dark area of the room that does not in fact include a monster. Yet novel creation must involve propositions of an imaginative kind, played over against those of a more accurately perceptive kind.

As one can tell from the above, the two major kinds of propositions are *imaginative* and *perceptive*. As one may have intuitively recognized, *the difference has to do with the feeling which gives rise to the predicate* or form of the proposition. In the case of *perceptive propositions*, the physical feeling which gives rise to the predicate is the *same* as that which gives rise to the subject. That is, the conceptual counterpart (conceptual feeling of the eternal object) is taken from the same physical feeling that indicates the logical subjects of the proposition.

In the case of *imaginative propositions*, the physical feeling whose conceptual counterpart forms the predicate is *different* from the physical feeling which indicates the logical subjects. This does not automatically mean that the two resulting propositions are that different. Depending upon the similarity of the two physical feelings, as well as the role of conceptual reversion, the two kinds could even result in virtually the same proposition. If the physical feelings involved in the imaginative proposition are virtually identical, though from different occasions (say, in the same society, such as two photons of light from the same sun), then the imaginative proposition could well resemble a perceptive proposition involving either of the two physical feelings. Conceptual reversion also would have the potential to make an imaginative proposition like a perceptive, as well as vice versa.

One can also see that imaginative propositions, which necessarily involve two different physical feelings, stand a better chance of including complexity based on simple diversity in a way that can result in greater intensity for the subject than a perceptive proposition (depending upon reversion, of course), and certainly in comparison with physical purposes. (As in all cases, this potential does not automatically mean realization.) This is generally in keeping with the spirit of Whitehead's remarks that imagination (speculative philosophy) has greater value than does a strict judgment of truth or falsity as a lure for further feelings, further integrations, and furthering the creative advance, thereby increasing the intensity of God's experience.

*Perceptive propositions*, which do have to do with the determination of truth and error, are further divided, depending in part on the presence or absence of conceptual reversion; *and* the source of that reversion (in the prehended object, or in the subject). The two general kinds of perceptive propositions are the *authentic* and the *unauthentic*. To take the latter first: *unauthentic* perceptive propositions are those with *reversion in the prehending subject*. The eternal object which forms the predicate is not exactly the same as the one originally exemplified in the actual occasion (or nexus) felt in the phase of physical feelings. It is relevant, yet in some way different.

In *authentic propositions*, there is *no reversion in the prehending subject*. The subject does not change what it receives, at least as far as reversion is concerned. However, reversion may or may not have occurred in the felt fact when it was subject. When there is *reversion in the object* (and none in the subject), then this is termed an *indirect authentic* proposition, or an indirect authentic feeling:

> In this case the proposition ascribes to its logical subjects the *physical* enjoyment of a nexus with the definition of its predicate; whereas that predicate may have only been enjoyed *conceptually* by these logical subjects. (*PR* 401)

On the other hand, a *direct authentic* propositional feeling exists where there is no reversion in those occasions which have been indicated as the subjects of the proposition. In this case, quite evidently, the proposition is true without qualification. Truth is no simple matter. Yet obviously we need to know the truth about the world in which we live, even if we grow by means of either imagination or perceptive error. There is a need to "test" this difference between the real and the pretend; Whitehead's argument is that this is not necessarily the most important determination we can make.

One additional, technical note. The name of the physical feeling which gives rise to the *logical subjects* is termed the *indicative feeling*. The physical feeling which gives rise to the *predicate* of the proposition is termed the *physical recognition*. It is evident that the difference in terms is more important in the case of imaginative propositions (where the two are different) than in the case of perceptive propositions (where they are the same). The terms "indicative" and "recognition" are also suggestive of the two different roles played; for it is by means of the predicate that the subjects are recognized; and the subjects are "indicated" by a given feeling, which suggests that they are not present in their full actuality. These terms also have affinity for their roles in symbolic reference; the "symbol" is how the indicated logical subjects are to be identified or recognized. This is recognition (symbol) of the meaning (logical subjects).

(The reader wishing to consult *Process and Reality* will find most of the above discussion on pp. 391-403. There are, however, some manuscript errors, or rather typographical errors, in that section which confuse his overly dense exposition.)

### 5. *Phase of Intellectual Feelings*

This phase is the greatest achievement of actuality. It is the contrast between the definite actuality (spoken of as a nexus perceived as a single unit) and a proposition whose logical subjects are indicated by this actuality. There is, that is, only one physical feeling involved

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in both the experience of the actual entity (nexus) and the logical subjects of the proposition. By virtue of the nature of propositions, the physical feeling which results in the predicative form of the proposition may or may not be the same as the other physical feeling. If it is the *same*, then one has the type of intellectual feeling termed *conscious perception*. If it is different, this is called an *intuitive judgment*. Both forms, though, have the subjective form of consciousness.

Consciousness, which arises only in this phase, is the result of the tension between the "in fact" and the "might be" about that same fact; between the physically felt fact and a proposition involving (in the logical subjects) the same fact. The first situation involves the affirmation of the fact objectified by the physical feeling; whereas the proposition (by means of its theoretical stance) is the negation of this affirmation. The negation is a result of the inclusion of the partially pure possibility; or, rather, the partial inclusion of the pure possibility.

Only a few occasions achieve this kind of feeling as part of their final nature. In itself, it is a complex feature; this suggests its general importance as well as the reason for its existence in the first place. Its purpose, that is, is to include both theory and fact within the unity of one subject in its final satisfaction. This, in another sense, involves the inclusion of both definiteness and indefiniteness in one, complex experience. This is the "best of both worlds": fully appreciated actuality in combination with (partial) possibility; definiteness about indefiniteness. In another sense, this is an intensification of "meaning" by comparing it in partial and theoretical abstraction with its full measure.

Whitehead summarizes the primary function of intellectual feelings as follows:

> The main function of these feelings is to heighten the emotional intensity accompanying the valuations in the conceptual feelings involved, and in the more physical purposes which are more primitive than any intellectual feelings. They perform this by the sharp-cut way in which they limit abstract valuation to express possibilities relevant to definite logical subjects. (*PR* 416)

The degree of intensity as well as the variety of the feelings is proportionate to the degree of consciousness.

The role of the predicate, as stated, determines the kind of intellectual feeling. Two extremes, important for seeing eventually the difference between presentational immediacy and propositional feelings, are found in those intellectual feelings which involve authentic direct perceptive propositions and those which involve a certain kind of imaginative propositional feeling. The first case results in "vivid immediate consciousness of what the nexus really *is* in the way of potentiality realized." (*PR* 411) The second case is where there is what he terms a "negative intuitive judgment"; (*PR* 417) the predicate (the form of the proposition) definitely is not exemplified in the nexus, but *it might be*. This "triumph of consciousness" is the "feeling of absence" which is felt "as produced by the definite exclusiveness of what is really present. Thus, the explicitness of negation, which is the peculiar characteristic of consciousness, is here at its maximum." (*PR* 417-18) This is the difference between the experience of potentiality which is versus potentiality which is not but might be. The one is the "lure" of the proposition which has been realized, the other is the lure most fully in effect. This is something which is not, yet certainly might be, in the actual world. This latter has value as the feature in consciousness which is clearly not there--yet can be. This lures the subject toward the eventual realization of what might be: the transformation from possibility to actuality. This is to be more fully understood in the context of God's need for (or aim at) intensity, as well as the potentially relevant solution of the organism's need.

## D. CONSCIOUSNESS OF FEELINGS IN OTHER PHASES

In the discussion of the phase of intellectual feelings, there has been no mention of being aware or conscious of other kinds of feelings. Is this possible? Whitehead's answer is that when feelings from earlier phases are allied with intellectual feelings, then the subject can be aware of these other feelings: "Thus an actual entity may, or may not, be conscious of some part of its experience." (*PR* 83) This is obviously important for integration of Whitehead with Gestalt Therapy, regardless of whether or not the concept of awareness from the latter is exactly equivalent to Whitehead's use of consciousness (and in a few passages, awareness). Gestalt Therapy's contact stages definitely involve awareness of a variety of features which seem comparable in many respects with the various phases of feelings.

Whitehead affirms this principle in more detail:

> A pure conceptual feeling in its first mode of origination never reaches consciousness. In this respect a pure mental feeling, conceptual or propositional, is analogous to a pure physical

> feeling. A primary feeling of either type, or a propositional feeling, can enrich its subjective form with consciousness only by means of its alliances. (*PR* 369-70)

> The subjective forms of physical purposes do not involve consciousness unless these feelings acquire integration with conscious perceptions or intuitive judgments. (*PR* 406)

The nature of the alliance, then, involves integration with the intellectual feelings, and this would appear from the above to be possible with any kind of feeling, though there are practical limitations:

> It seems as though in practice, for human beings at least, only transmuted feelings acquire consciousness, never simple physical feelings. Consciousness originates in the higher phases of integration and illuminates those phases with the greater clarity and distinctness. (*PR* 362)

In other words, we may be aware of the efficaciousness of the many occasions in a beautiful flower, yet not ever aware of a single occasion in the flower. We feel their efficaciousness as perhaps a single force, not as the multiplicity of the many purposive occasions. (This much detail would be exceedingly distracting for most given situations.)

Propositional feelings hold a special place in the scheme of consciousness:

> The subjective forms of propositional feelings are dominated by valuation, rather than by consciousness. In a pure propositional feeling the logical subjects have preserved their indicated particularity, but have lost their own real modes of objectification. The subjective form lies in the twilight zone between pure physical feeling and the clear consciousness which apprehends the contrast between physical feeling and imagined possibility. (*PR* 402)

The general sense here, though somewhat unclearly stated, seems to be that propositional feelings are close to awareness, yet not in the focal center or clear consciousness. This would be expected by the nature and purpose of both intellectual and propositional feelings.

(The purpose of intellectual feelings is the intensification of the contrast between propositions and the full actuality.) This passage shows also how Whitehead sees the various phases as merging with each other, their edges blurred. This passage also affirms the central role that possibility plays both in the creative advance and in awareness as promotion of that advance.

## E. FINAL VIEW OF CONCRESCENCE: PERCEPTION OF THE PRESENT

This section will offer an interpretation of concrescence which will move the discussion directly to the theory of perception. Ideally, this interpretation will appear to emerge naturally and clearly from what has come before; it is an attempt to lift up what seems to be one of the most fundamental themes without tearing it from the context.

### 1. *Final View of Concrescence*

Concrescence may be seen as the process whereby the subject begins with the "all" and ends with the "most of the all" that the subject is capable of including in its final unity. The "all" is the universe of actuality and of pure potentiality. The "most of the all" is some degree of this totality which achieves a definite unity in *this* subject. This is most for this subject, which may be more or less than for another subject. Each subject "tries" for, or is lured toward, the all, for this is the point of greatest possible intensity. Becoming, therefore, is a partial elimination of facts and possibilities down to the "amount" (number and quality) that can still be integrated by this subject with it still retaining its ability to be *one* subject.

This means that the more actuality and the more pure possibility that can be included, the richer the occasion, the more complex the integration; the more the variety, the greater the intensity of the experience. No temporal occasion can include pure potentiality as fully pure, let alone all pure potentiality. Only God has achieved this in God's primoridal experience; and even God orders these pure possibilities with the aim of achieving God's maximum intensity of experience upon their full realization (chaos achieves some basic formal order which has an aim).

However, the more purity of possibility that can be included by an occasion in its final experience, the greater the potential intensity of its experience which is realized upon satisfaction of its becoming. A partial impurity is better than none at all. The physical purpose, which completely reunites the pure possibility with the full actuality included,does not leave as much purity of possibility in its experience as does a propositional feeling. In a sense, it leaves nothing indefinite, thereby emphasizing actuality over potentiality. What intensity it achieves (by means of adversion and reversion, if these happen to be included) is expressed in full actuality.

Propositional feelings, on the other hand, leave some of the possibility within the subject's experience. Not all is made definite in this class of feelings; indefiniteness or indeterminateness is deliberately left and thereby included in the subject which includes these feelings. This is done, however, at some cost to the full appreciation of actuality. This full appreciation is also partially eliminated (just as the pure possibility is partially eliminated as being purely possible). Actuality is less fully actual so that some possibility may be more fully included, or (better), retained. The actual and the possible come to resemble each other in propositional feelings, unlike the subject's original phases (physical and conceptual feelings).

*The interpretation here is that the state represented in a propositional feeling is closer to where each subject "begins": with the full appreciation of actuality and possibility; and the degree of elimination of each involves the other, just as the degree of retention of one involves the degree of retention of the fullness of the other. This relationship between actuality and possibility is converse (negatively correlated).*

The difficult step to make is to get from this emphasis of indeterminateness back to the definiteness of actuality. This is accomplished by intellectual feelings, which include both physical purposes (the emphasis of actuality) *and* propositional feelings (with emphasis on pure possibility). Intellectual feelings are the necessary step to be taken so that a subject may include both a physical feeling of actuality combined with the theory concerning this actuality, where the theory is a "might be" about the fact compared with the fact. Intellectual feelings, thus, include the "best of both worlds"--in a definite subject (definite upon becoming).

It is clear from this that a propositional feeling is *not* inclusive of the degree of definiteness of actuality which is necessary for the actual to truly become actual. This phase, therefore, cannot by itself end an occasion's subjectivity. A subject, in order to become an object, must be made or make itself definite. A physical fact felt only imcompletely cannot achieve this definiteness--just the opposite in this case: it is left or made indefinite in order to be joined with the partially pure possibility.

There can therefore be only two kinds of occasions which achieve actuality. One includes some degree of indeterminateness in its final definition and the other does not. The latter, in *this* discussion, will be called an actual occasion of the first grade (Grade I); the former will be called an actual occasion of the second grade (Grade II). In *PR*, Whitehead describes four grades of occasions (the first of which does not endure--i.e., has no purpose). (See *PR* 269-70). The interpretation here covers basically the same territory but does not make the same distinctions made by Whitehead. His first grade is ignored here (these happen in "empty space"); and grades two and three are simplified into what is called Grade I here. Whitehead's fourth grade and the present Grade II are essentially the same. (The word grade is kept out of the sense that these so-called types of occasions are but gradations of each other.)

It is clear from this discussion of concrescence that Grade II occasions (inclusive of intellectual feelings) are the most intense experience possible for an occasion, at least as far as the theory tends to be explicitly developed by Whitehead. Yet it is clear, too, that Grade I occasions are essential to both preservation of order, and as vital components for the endurance and actualness of a Grade II occasion.

### 2. *Perception of the Present*

Paradoxically, at least in first appearance, this greater indefiniteness included in a Grade II occasion by means of a propositional feeling results in a greater "definiteness of enjoyment and purpose which is absent in the blank evaluation of physical feeling into physical purpose." (*PR* 427) The clarification of this paradox is what leads this whole thrust of concrescence directly to the theory of perception. This paradox is clarified by the perceptual mode of presentational immediacy. *What* the subject becomes more capable of "enjoying" (with definiteness and with definite purpose) is the presented duration. This is increased enjoyment of the immediate present moment of subjectivity. ("Purpose" in this context is the subject's relationship toward future occasions. "Enjoyment" is its own experience, in and for itself. The two obviously are aspects or expressions of the same feature in virtually the same sense as subject-superject--enjoyment-purpose.)

Ultimately, this means that such an occasion (Grade II) is more capable of "projecting" the causal experience it receives by means of its physical feelings (equivalent to its perception of the causal efficaciousness of the past) back onto the locus from which this experience came. More correctly, this subject (or percipient) is now capable of accurate speculation about this intrusion from the past as it is likely existing as a contemporary in the present. Though there is no direct feeling of or between contemporary subjects, the subject perceiving by means of presentational immediacy perceives contemporaries as they most likely are by direct extension from the immediate past--from the data implanted by means of perception in the mode of causal efficacy. This is theory, but theory that is capable of being increasingly accurate the more "relevant" or immediately past is the object of perception in the mode of causal efficacy. The subject's ability to make accurate discriminations would therefore increase immeasurably by comparison with causal efficacy as the primary or exclusive mode. As noted, this mode (for human beings) is most accurate with the body; i.e., the spatially closest and the temporally closest. When spatial and/or temporal distance is involved, presentational immediacy is the source of accurate discriminations; causal efficacy alone has little comparison in these situations. This is in part due to the fact that physical feelings do not "say" from where they arise, particularly if there are many which are quite similar. By virtue of transmutation (and/or the several obligations related to it), this tremendous similarity is simplified and reduced to one feeling of one object (a nexus), guided by the eternal object exemplified in the nexus.

Perception of the present which is tremendously enhanced in the mode of presentational immediacy also means that the subject is capable of experiencing more and more of God's aim for itself in the context of the immediately relevant universe. God is always becoming, and therefore is always in every subject's presented duration. God is relative to all in the present; it is in God's nature to be concerned with the present, where the subject exists conceptually for itself. God's lure (the proposition formed by God's initial aim for the subject) is experienced in the present yet it is derived from the past and aimed toward realization in the future. The importance of the inclusion of past occasions for accurate (or imaginative) perceptions must not be diminished. The more included, the more ground one has for whatever perception may be necessary. This continues to affirm the importance of the causal or id mode--of being in full touch with one's ground.

## PART THREE: CONCRESCENCE AND PERCEPTION

The conclusion of the prior section on the phases of concrescence brought this discussion directly to the heart of the theory of perception, namely the importance of the perception of the present by means of presentational immediacy, a "recurrent theme" throughout *Process and Reality*. (*PR* 54) The theory of perception in *PR* appears similar to the briefer form as it was developed in *Symbolism*, so generally there would be little point in restating the details. The intention in this section is to present the general integration of the two theories (concrescence and perception), while at the same time elaborating on certain issues of perception that either help to make their connection clearer, or point out apparent differences.

William Cobb,[9] in a fairly recent article, anticipated much of this discussion. He sees the two theories as approaching the same terrain from slightly different perspectives, with different purposes, and with different vocabularies. There are some portions of his argument which may be either incompletely developed or inaccurate, but his argument generally confirms my own views. The purpose of his article "is to show, by means of a detailed comparison, that the two analyses are coherent."[10] He generally argues for this point, concluding that his analysis "has been sketchy, but hopefully . . . sufficient to give some indication of the fact that the two analyses . . . are complementary."[11] He appears to be implicitly recognizing that his intention of a detailed presentation ends up being more of a sketch of the themes. He does not explain the difference between coherence and complementary, and there may well be some. My own presentation is also a sketch; a truly detailed presentation is far beyond the scope of this section.

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[9] William S. Cobb, "Whitehead's Twofold Analysis of Experience," *Modern Schoolman*, 47 (1970), 321-30.

[10] Ibid., p. 321.

In general I agree with Cobb that the two theories developed by Whitehead are coherent in the sense that they belong to the same general theory of the nature of reality. How useful "coherence" is as a term to describe the relationships between the various phases of concrescence and the modes of perception is perhaps minimal. At the least, this term does not give the full indication of how the two theories differ in their emphases at certain points. "Complementary" may be a better term, though this is still fairly general.

There are one or two major points of difference between my own presentation than Cobb's, and additional minor ones. Some of this is due to the difference in my own purpose, and some of this is due to a more detailed examination of some of the features of Whitehead's theories. One of the major differences has to do with the relationship between presentational immediacy and propositional feelings. Another difference is in the treatment of sensa; Cobb makes little reference to this concept, whereas here this shall receive an expanded treatment.

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[11] Ibid., p. 330.

## A. GENERAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONCRESCENCE AND PERCEPTION

It may be preferable to say that the two theories are about the same basic unit of reality, the actual occasion, from different perspectives. This is said in recognition of the ontological principle, whereby all that exists in the actual world (including "every condition to which the process of becoming conforms in any particular instance" [*PR* 36]) must be referred to some actual entity. This would include the theory of perception, and the specific dynamics of the various modes. This reference to an actual occasion as the mutual point of reference between the two theories is also due to an impression of one of the relative differences between them. Perception in *PR* is generally presented in larger categories than the categories of concrescence. (That they are larger in scope than some of the detailed categories of concrescence does *not* mean that they are more inclusive overall. This is just the opposite condition in some cases.) Whereas the theory of concrescence deals with the "how" of becoming, perception tends more to deal with the "what" of the subject's perceptive experience. The "how" requires seemingly many more details to be explained than does the "what" of experience.

There is some indication, also, that perception is the more subjectively or meaningfully relevant of the two theories. This theory is more on the subject side of the subject-object polarity; though this cannot be taken too far for they are implicitly joined with indistinct boundaries. The discussion in *PR* shifts from one to the other, sometimes quite subtly.

Whether Whitehead's lack of integration was due to his own lack of clarity about these two areas developed from different histories of concerns, or for reasons that have to do with as yet uncovered levels of meaning in *PR* itself, or for other reasons, is not clear. (His system's presentation has the explicit sense of being speculative and thereby acting as a lure. The lack of integration does act as a lure to further thought.)

## B. PHASES OF CONCRESCENCE AND MODES OF PERCEPTION

This section will cover some detail on each aspect of the theories with an aim at exploring how, to what extent (if at all), a given phase of concrescence relates to a given mode of perception. The direction toward which this exposition points is that, for human beings, *causal efficacy* is the physical feeling by the subject of the world as grouped into nexūs (involving a transmuted physical feeling); and this world is experienced as causally efficacious for the percipient subject by reason of the physical purposes in the given. *Presentational immediacy*, on the other hand, is a propositional feeling with its speculation centered on the presented duration, derived from bodily efficacy; and it involves the kind of propositional feeling called "perceptive," for the most part, but not exclusively. *Symbolic reference* is the concluding integration of these two primary or direct modes of perception, involving error (if not always consciousness) as does the phase of intellectual feelings.

### 1. *Causal Efficacy and Physical Feelings/Purposes*

This case is fairly straight forward. It is abundantly clear from *PR* that causal efficacy is the experience the subject has of the world. We experience ourselves as being done to, as subject to the controlling presences which surround us, to which at one level we must conform. By extension this would suggest this mode is in potential like the simplest actual occasion; yet of course it is not, as has been indicated. Practically speaking, we are never aware of a single such feeling, but virtually always of the transmuted physical feeling involving a nexus of occasions (whereby the group is perceived as a single entity exemplifying a common theme). Thus causal efficacy is slightly more complex than a simple physical feeling, though this is not critical for the overall connection.

As indicated in the discussion on concrescence, a physical feeling becomes a physical purpose by virtue of its "blank evaluation." (*PR* 427) This would suggest a perception in the mode of causal efficacy is subject to valuation (and reiteration or reversion), and becomes in turn efficacious for the future.

As noted in the discussion on presentational immediacy and symbolic reference below, feelings brought into the subject by means of causal efficacy are also taken up in higher phases.

### 2. *Presentational Immediacy and Propositional Feelings*

These two bear a strong similarity. The question is whether or not they are essentially the same or equivalent feeling, or are in some way different. Are propositional feelings a larger class than those of this perceptual mode; and are there special conditions attached to presentational immediacy which limit this perceptual mode in a way that propositional feelings are not limited? As indicated in the introduction to this discussion, the tentative answer is "yes."

The limitations, however, are not in the *kind* of propositional feeling capable of being entertained in this perceptual mode. As William Cobb notes, there is an indication in *PR* that feelings in this mode might be equivalent only to one type of perceptive propositional feeling: "In much of the discussion of presentational immediacy it does seem that the only type of propositional feeling which would be relevant is the direct authentic perceptive feeling."[12] He notes that presentational immediacy may be involved in "delusive" perceptions (*PR* 186), thereby making this a broader category than just authentic direct propositions.

There is an indication (not mentioned by Cobb) that presentational immediacy may involve the other major kind of propositional feeling, the imaginative. This is contained on the page just cited, as well as in the following:

> Again in the transmuted feeling only part of the original nexus may be objectified, and the eternal object may have been derived from members of the other part of the original nexus. This is the case for perception in the mode of 'presentational immediacy' . . . . (*PR* 386)

The basic elements of an imaginative proposition are named, specifically the origin of the logical subjects from one portion of the original (objectified) nexus and the eternal object (for the predicate) from another part of the nexus. Thus, it seems quite possible that presentational immediacy involves both kinds of propositional feelings (perceptive and imaginative).

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[12] Ibid., p. 328.

The other source of possible differentiation--the *locus* of the logical subjects exemplifying the predicative form--also is mentioned by Cobb:

> That is, in the discussion of presentational immediacy the emphasis is on the illustrated contemporary world while in that of propositional feelings it is on the entertainment of propositions which may or may not be illustrative of the world.[13]

Cobb's conclusion is that presentational immediacy is a "general discussion" of all types of propositional feelings "from a particular point of view."[14] I would agree with this conclusion as far as it goes. But this does not underscore the difference between the two strongly enough, and may leave an impression they are really the same. The differences are as follows:

a. Presentational immediacy is not simply perception of only the contemporary world (in a propositional manner), but *it explicitly involves the body and the senses*:

> Presentational immediacy is our perception of the contemporary world by means of the senses. . . . But this analysis of presentational immediacy has not exhausted the content of the feeling. For we feel *with the body*. (*PR* 474)

> We see that a feeling of presentational immediacy comes into being by reason of an integration of a conceptual feeling drawn from bodily efficacy with a bare regional feeling which is also a component in a complex feeling of bodily efficacity. (*PR* 482)

Whitehead gives an indication that presentational immediacy, though not nonexistent in occasions of the lowest grade (in empty space), is actually "negligible" in those occasions. (*PR* 269) This means for those occasions that their perception of their presented duration is also negligible. This is gradually transformed as one moves up the scale of occasions to those of high-grade. (Cf., *PR* 269-70) There is no indication that propositional feelings, as a general class, are so limited. They are not specifically limited to the body and the senses (though they may well be in practice, as the product of high-grade occasions capable of intellectual feelings).

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[13] Ibid., p. 328.

[14] Ibid., p. 329.

b. More importantly, *propositional feelings are not limited to the presented duration*. Presentational immediacy is so "limited," as is abundantly indicated in *PR*. Locus in the presented duration is the concern of this mode of perception. This locus is defined by the mathematical relations involved with a so-called "strain-locus."[15] (Cf., *PR* 493 and 498) This is what allows this mode to be termed "barren." (*PR* 498) A propositional feeling does not exclusively or necessarily involve such a limit.

The conclusion for this mode is that presentational immediacy defines one aspect of a propositional feeling, but does not define all kinds of propositions in terms of the locus of their logical subjects. The limit imposed on presentational immediacy has to do with the locus of the logical subjects of the proposition--a very important limit as described earlier in the theory of concrescence. To obscure this is to obscure the importance of the "clutch at vivid immediacy." (*PR* 160) This is one of the characteristics of life. Otherwise, the way would seem open to use the discussion of propositions and of presentational immediacy to supplement each other.

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[15] "A feeling in which the forms exemplified in the datum concern geometrical, straight, and flat loci will be called a strain." (*PR* 472)

### 3. *Sensa and Eternal Objects (and Conceptual Feelings)*

There is no phase or mode in perception which is explicitly comparable to conceptual feelings. However, the objects of conceptual feelings (eternal objects) are equated with the data of perception, namely *sensa*. The following quotation illustrates this equivalency:

> Those eternal objects which will be classified under the name 'sensa' constitute the lowest category of eternal objects. Such eternal objects do not express a manner of relatedness . . . . But . . . each sensum . . . cannot be dissociated from its potentiality for ingression into *any* actual entity, and for its potentiality of contrasts and of patterned relationships with other eternal objects. Thus each sensum shares the characteristic common to all eternal objects, that it introduces the notion of the logical variable, in both forms, the unselective 'any' and the selective 'some.' (*PR* 174-75)

Sensa, therefore, fulfill the conditions described earlier for eternal objects (see *PR* 446). When sensa are discussed as objects they are termed occasionally "sense-data." In general, sensa are "qualities, such as colours, sounds, bodily feelings, tastes, smells," (*PR* 96) and so on.

It is clear that as an equivalent term for eternal objects, they must be felt, though the feeling or perception of them is not given a specific term. There is no way, though, that they could not be involved and in that sense not perceived, even if the perception of them is not in consciousness unless allied with higher feelings (cf., *PR* 369-70)

### 4. *Symbolic Reference and Intellectual Feelings*

As Cobb writes, "symbolic reference seems to be used as a general term covering the various types of intellectual feelings . . . ."[16] There is little if any explicit comment connecting symbolic reference with consciousness, particularly in the forceful way consciousness is connected with intellectual feelings. Cobb reviews some of the more implicit connections for symbolic reference.[17] There is some indication that symbolic reference may occur without consciousness also being produced. Cobb indicates this in the above reference. (Another such indication is given in Whitehead's discussion on pp. 269-70 of *PR* dealing with the four grades of occasions. See particularly the discussion of the third and fourth grades, p. 270.) This would suggest, as Cobb concludes, that symbolic reference may be a larger class than intellectual feelings, including additional kinds of perceptual experiences.[18] As far as I can tell, the other characteristics of the two are the same: 1. *Both involve a complex comparison* (the original physical feeling compared with the proposition, which itself is a comparison of a special sort; the reference between causal efficacy and presentational immediacy, which itself is a comparison of the order of a propositional feeling). 2. *Both involve the evaluation or judgment of truth and error.*

### 5. *Conclusion*

This account has shown that, with one partial exception, the perceptive modes and the phases of concrescence are close to being equivalent, yet are not truly so. The two primary perceptual modes seem to be slightly (causal efficacy) or somewhat (presentational immediacy) less inclusive than their concrescent counterparts. In the third perceptual mode (symbolic reference), the concrescent counterpart *may* be the less inclusive. The second, pure conceptual phase of concrescent does not have a perceptual mode as even a close equivalent; however, the objects of this class of feeling are explicitly equated with the sensa involved in perception. Bearing in mind these limitations, it is possible to discuss at least some of the features of the one when discussing the other theory. For example, "conformity" may be discussed in the context of causal efficacy; and conceptual valuation in the context of sensa, and so on. Yet, this account is a "sketch." There may be other limitations to this opening between the two theories. With the general affirmation of the value of speculation, and the value of interest or novelty over truth, this is the direction to be pursued until the other limits become apparent, if they do exist.

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[16] Ibid., p. 326.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p. 327.

Perhaps this chapter has been overly developed from the perspective of the summary of Whitehead that generally would have supported the integrations to come. However, the purpose of this immediate project is to point the way to the larger task to be done, and the resources here are valuable for that. The detail in some cases will be taken up additionally in the more specific discussion of therapeutic issues and Whitehead's concepts in the Appendices. Beyond that, the detail afforded here may suggest other connections to the reader than have been seen or explicated by this author. The wealth in Whitehead is indeed seemingly endlessly suggestive, if not always conclusive.

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## Chapter 5

# INTEGRATION OF GESTALT THERAPY AND WHITEHEAD

The aim of this chapter is to bring together all of the material developed and integrated in the preceding chapters, particularly Chapters 2-4. To accomplish this integration of Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead, the ultimate aim of this dissertation, it will be necessary to do some separating of what already has been integrated. This will aid in the overall picture being more soundly developed, and is also suggested by certain intuitively natural parallels between the processes of gestalt formation and concrescence, and the self modes and the modes of perception.

## A. INTRODUCTION

After some preliminary material immediately below, the organization of the chapter generally will be to parallel the order of Chapters 2 and 4. First will be a discussion of some of the general features that can be lifted out from the two systems. This will include a discussion of the formal similarities between the notion of the self and the dominant occasion, a gestalt and an actual occasion, as well as contact and prehension.

The second section of the chapter will be the integration of the self modes and the perceptual modes. The third section will be the integration of the *stages* of gestalt formation (called contact stages) and the *phases* of concrescence. These two groups have an immediately apparent similarity, and it simplifies the final, four-way integration to approach it from the perspective of the essential features of two groups instead of four. The four-way integration is contained in a brief summary. The major discussion is included with the two preliminary cross-field integrations.

One of the basic reasons for performing this complex integration is that it opens doors within and between the two systems in such a way that a wide variety of concepts and issues are available for development. Yet limits remain which keep the development within some boundaries. These boundaries in turn keep the discussion from being meaningless. These basic limits are those themes, at their most general level, which have relevance for therapeutic issues and a related theory of personality.

This chapter will not exhaust all the possible discussions even at a fairly technical and abstract level of the various permutations of all the terms discussed thus far. The general format for this discussion, as well as potential extensions, should be reasonably clear, however, in the conclusions drawn at the end of this chapter. This chapter is also more freely integrative than some of the prior discussion. Various of the concepts held apart in prior discussions will be presented as they come up in some of the discussions which follow. They may not appear always in the same general discussion as their original presentation would lead one to expect.

Despite this chapter's title, the following cannot be a *complete* integration, and should not be viewed as such. To integrate means to make a whole from various parts. This unified whole is related to but different from any of its various parts. This principle, quite evidently, is central to both systems. (In one it is discussed as a gestalt, and in the other as an actual occasion.) To truly and fully integrate Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead would mean the creation of a system which is related to but different from either. This new system would demonstrate its origins, yet would be more than either source considered by itself, and more than would be expected a priori from their combination. It would be new, with new principles and dynamics. This new system--the larger task of this dissertation as mentioned in Chapter 1--is most closely approached in the Appendix, where various of the possible themes which suggest themselves are selectively and initially explored.

### 1. *Value of Integration*

This new system could have value for both sources. It could refine Gestalt Therapy by extending the process perspective developed within it by Perls and others. It also could make the therapy clearer and more systematic. Employing the categories and concepts of a philosophical system which has a strong affinity with the themes of Gestalt Therapy makes it possible to more profoundly organize the concepts and categories of the latter. This includes more systematically relating the various concepts and dynamics, as well as more sharply differentiating and more clearly merging them. This means bringing the various portions of the theory together into more complex interrelationships by means of a philosophy which is concerned with true and universal fundamentals.

A value to Whitehead's thought could be the increase of the perception of its relevance to the human condition. More importantly, this project could increase the system's real efficacy for changing this condition. An alliance with an applied field, as mediated by the therapy's theory, means that Whitehead's ideas stand a better chance of being transformed from mentality to actuality. By extending Whitehead's vision of the nature of the cosmos into this field concerned with effectively aiding persons (and groups) in their struggle to heal themselves of sometimes agonizing and deadly dis-ease, this new system would translate the universal to the particular.

This also could further the work being done to make his thought more accessible by expressing it in terms more readily understood as relevant to the world in which we live. The relevance of Gestalt Therapy is more widely accepted than is Whitehead's, and is more familiarly expressed than is Whitehead's thought. In this way Gestalt Therapy would serve to provide the color of illustration that is lacking in Whitehead. This would be a tremendous value to Whitehead as long as the purely potential within his system is not viewed as somehow defined or settled or finished by these "illustrative" connections. The creative advance continues from becoming to becoming.

This ideally could be returned to Whitehead as potential modification or extension of his theory. There is much in his theory of the nature of reality that is not fully developed. One primary example in this dissertation is the connection between his theory of perception and his theory of concrescence. Working through the integration of Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead produced the need, for this author at least, of seeing how the two major facets of his theory were interrelated.

The new system would have value for other interconnections. The applied field here is known at a general level as psychotherapy. Psychotherapy is practiced in an enormous variety of ways, including in the fashion generally called Gestalt Therapy. This new system would bring Whitehead into potential contact with other forms of therapy, as well as bring these schools of therapy into systematic contact with each other. This latter would be the result of viewing more than one approach to psychotherapy from a common perspective.

Another set of interconnections would be with other fields concerned with aiding persons in their intra- and interpersonal struggles. One major field, of course, is the professional ministry, in particular the Christian ministry. Ministers are concerned with essentially the same issues as practiticioners of psychotherapy, with one notable exception. The exception, of ultimate importance, is the revelation of God in the person of Jesus the Christ. ("Person," in this case, refers to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, as well as the issues stemming from this series of events.) Individual therapists may concern themselves with such issues with varying degrees of precision, of course; and some schools of therapy are more expressly religious or theological in their orientation than others (Psychosynthesis as opposed to orthodox Freudian analysis, for example). The field as a whole, however, is not. By creating a new system, it could be possible to show more clearly the theological nature of psychotherapy by means of process concepts. Much work has been done in the area of Christian theology, in particular, to integrate it with Whitehead's thought. The new system, therefore, also could be joined with this development.

My personal concern, at present, lies primarily with the initial project (extending process thought into psychotherapy, beginning with Gestalt Therapy). I am interested, obviously, in all of the above, and to some degree all are dealt with here. My greatest interest right now, though, is to develop an approach to therapy that better fits the essential nature of persons and their world.

The integration actually developed, though not the complete system, should point the way to the larger project. This present integration will be expressed in the context of the comparisons and parallels demonstrated below. The integration as such will not be simply those demonstrated similarities. This level of integration also will be expressed periodically in statements that are intended to do justice to each of the two systems, yet are general in their form. Ideally, nothing of value to either theory will be excluded in such statements.

The following section reviews and extends the caution to be taken when approaching Whitehead, or any simultaneously wholistic process, from an analytical perspective. The next section is the integration of some of the fundamental concepts from Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead. These concepts include the self and the dominant occasion, a gestalt and an actual occasion, and contact and prehension. The major sections on gestalt formation (contact stages) and concrescence, and on the self modes and the modes of perception point to the final, overall integration.

### 2. *A Caution*

An occasion of experience, when analyzed into its various subordinate dynamics, can appear to be a sequential series of stages. This perspective is a result of the analysis, not a characteristic of the process under analysis. An actual occasion "consumes" time, it does not happen *in* time. In reality it is a developmental process which is complexly and simultaneously interactive. *An occasion actually comes into existence in such a way that all of its various dynamics mutually influence each other*. This includes, importantly, the final outcome, which is the aim at which the occasion points from the very beginning. The final outcome also influences the beginning of succeeding occasions. In the following description, this understanding (the mutually interactive nature of the occasion's subordinate dynamics) will be assumed. It is exceedingly difficult, however, to describe this developmental process without leaving the impression that the quality which characterizes this process is linearity or sequentiality. One perspective which is closer to the mark is that of simultaneously present hierarchies of integrations. The more complex uses the features of the less complex--but they exist side-by-side (in a limited sense). This includes the overall integration of the entire occasion.

The following description is largely analytical, and should not be mistaken for the actual facts of experience. This attempt to describe the nature of experience in its various components requires, or is aided by, analysis. The importance of this style of approach is the light it sheds on what can be done to influence a different outcome, or to discover what is missing and thereby suggesting a means of completion. This purpose touches the general category of healing and can be done in a seemingly endless variety of ways--including teaching and psychotherapy. My concern is largely with psychotherapy, yet one can see how one style of approach shades into another, and how various approaches are included within each other. A good teacher will employ some of the methods of the therapist; and a good therapist will employ some of the methods of the teacher.

## B. INTEGRATION OF MAJOR CONCEPTS

Some of the most fundamental concepts from each system show a striking similarity, sometimes in quite detailed ways. These basic concepts include the self, gestalt, contact, and gestalt formation (contact stages); and dominant occasion, actual occasion, prehension, and concrescence.

### 1. *The Self and the Dominant Occasion*

In the definition of a gestalt as an organized whole, one can sense the similarity to Whitehead's understanding of an actual occasion. They are concepts of different levels of generality, though. The former is developed exclusively around human perception and experience, whereas the latter is described as the ultimate and indivisible unit of reality. The former, however, can be shown to be a specific example of the latter, as follows:

a. *The self as a dominant occasion*. In Whitehead's system, the occasion reigning over the human being (the *regnant* or *dominant occasion*) is a specific kind of actual occasion. As such, it includes all the features of the most basic kind while having some unique to itself.

(Unique features include *propositional* and *intellectual feelings*, which develop from the universal, basic features.) *In Gestalt Therapy, this dominant occasion is what is called the "self."* The self, in Gestalt Therapy, is defined as a system of contacts which is in charge of the whole person (or organism). It is the organizing center of the person, that is. Clearly this is the same as dominant. Gestalt Therapy sees the self as varying with the dominant organic need; Whitehead sees the dominant occasion as "wandering" through the "interstices" of the brain to wherever there is the most intense activity. *Both see the self, that is, as the dominant, organizing center of the person; one which varies according to, or in response to, the body's strongest (most intense) experience. This variance includes conformity. Both see the self as self-created out of its sub-elements (contacts or prehensions), one which is a whole when completed.*

b. *An important difference.* There is a major and important difference. Perls does not always differentiate between the person's experience of the moment and the source of that experience. He is unclear, that is, about the difference between the self and the rest of the person--the difference between the dominant occasion and the other occasions which make up the person. In Whitehead's system, there is a distinct *difference* between the two, as well as clarity about the way in which the two are *interrelated*. There is only one dominant occasion, and it feeds upon/is fed by all the occasions of the body. In a sense, the dominant occasion emerges from these other occasions and, as such, is supported by them. The dominant occasion conformally feels all that lies in its past, and in that sense resembles what it feels. The self, that is, at the first phase of its becoming feels those other occasions' feelings in the same way they felt them. This does *not* mean that this occasion *is* those feelings in those past occasions. *The self is not the body.* The dominant occasion is a separate, discrete entity; its "boundaries" are quite distinct. *The self, though, is the feeling of those feelings, and it pervades the body.* This shows the *essential interrelatedness of the self and the body.*

Whitehead's distinction allows for higher stages of experience (particularly intellectual feelings) to be related to bodily experience. At the same time, these higher stages can be seen as something which do not occur in those bodily experiences (at least under normal circumstances). The same distinction also allows for the definite difference between self and other, which is quite important for therapy. (Perls' strong emphasis on *this* difference is summarized in his popularized credo, which includes the statement, "You and you and I am I.") Whitehead makes this distinction between self and other possible, quite clear, and consistent with the difference between the self and the rest of the organism. The body is more relevant to the dominant occasion, normally, than other occasions, however. These differences, that is, are on a continuum. His system also makes clear the interrelatedness of occasions and therefore the essential interrelatedness of self and body, and of persons (along the same continuum).

This essential interrelatedness of persons is not always emphasized by Perls, in contrast with his emphasis on the interrelatedness of the self and the organism. Perls, beyond his personal bias, was responding to the nature of the clients he saw. This produced a bias in the *theory* of Gestalt Therapy which Whitehead illuminates and corrects. Disturbances within and between people, that is, often have to do with their inability to tell the difference between themselves and others; at the same time, they have an inability to accurately sense the interrelatedness of their body and their self. Both errors produce a "dis-ease." Whitehead shows how the two problems are fundamentally related even as Gestalt Therapy shows how often these problems arise. For example, the problem of *unhealthy confluence* (inability to discriminate self from other) can be seen as an emphasis of the experience of *causal efficacy* at the expense of the other phases of experience. By contrast, the problem of disowning one's body is the result of an emphasis on later phases of experience (particularly, *presentational immediacy* or *propositional feelings*) at the expense of one's causal feelings of the body.

### 2. *A Gestalt and an Actual Occasion*

The preceding section has dealt with some of the same elements that would be included in an isolated discussion of the similarity between the concept of a gestalt and the concept of an actual occasion. In this section, an actual occasion will be discussed in its more general terms as opposed to its specific form as a dominant occasion. The self, as noted earlier, is defined as the agent which forms, or experiences, and *is* a gestalt.

a. *Gestalt*. A gestalt is defined as "a pattern, a configuration, the particular form of organization of the individual parts which go into its make up." As such, *a gestalt is a complete unit of experience*. It is, by definition, a whole, and complete in that sense. *It also completes itself*. It is formed out of its feelings of, or contact with, the field (which includes body and environment). As noted in Chapter 2, Gestalt psychologists discovered that the subject tends to make (or perceive) a complete experience, even if the data are themselves incomplete. A few dots properly arranged can be seen as a complete figure (circle, square, and so forth). In addition, *situations that remain incomplete*, unfinished, have *potency for the future*; that is, the *drive toward completion is strong* on the part of the self. The self, as noted below, is really a gestalt, the gestalt for the moment. The self, therefore, as a gestalt, drives toward completion of its integration. In this sense, it is self-created.

b. *Actual occasion*. Likewise, an actual occasion is an organizing and organized whole. As a becoming subject, it is the integrator of those feelings. As a completed object, an actual occasion is defined as the unified integration of its various feelings or prehensions. This is the subject-superject nature of the occasion. An occasion functions as a subject while becoming, yet it becomes with the future--future occasions--in mind. This latter is its superjective nature (i.e., "thrown" toward the future, beyond the subject).

The occasion's prehensions, or feelings, are of the past. For the dominant occasion this past includes its predecessors, all the occasions of the body, and ultimately the rest of the past universe. Once it has become, the occasion is by definition complete. It is then a single entity, a single, complex feeling.

*Both a gestalt and an actual occasion, as finished events, are organized wholes. They have organized themselves into a single unit from their various sub-elements (contacts or prehensions). These wholes have potency for the future.*

The *difference* between the views is that *in Gestalt Therapy the self-creating agent is termed the self, not the gestalt.* It would not be inconsistent with the theory, however, to say that the self is created by the coming into being of the gestalt. The self is described as being self-created. ("The self dissolves the given. . .", [*GT* 404] ". . . self is the dynamic relation of ground and figure." [*GT* 413]) If the self is seen as a gestalt, then one can say that a gestalt is self-created. This understanding would show a gestalt to be an active agent in the same sense as an actual occasion (active in its own creation). This sense is supported in the discussion of gestalt formation (i.e., contact stages), which is developed below. *It is clear, that is, that the gestalt forms itself through a series of stages.*

The problem is that Gestalt Therapy tends to separate to a degree the concepts of self, gestalt, and gestalt formation, without clearly showing their interrelatedness. Seeing the self as one kind of gestalt in the same way that the dominant occasion is one kind of actual occasion should clarify this issue, including more clearly showing the fundamental identity of these various concepts. The self, in other words, can be defined in terms of a gestalt, and therefore really is the gestalt of the moment. *The self is a gestalt which comes into being;*

*this gestalt reigns over the person; it is a self-creation out of its sub-elements (contacts).*

### 3. *Contact and Prehension*

As already noted, the sub-elements which make up the whole entity are termed "contacts" for Gestalt Therapy and "prehensions" for Whitehead.

a. *Contact.* That a gestalt is comprised of its contacts is clear from the discussion of gestalt formation and the description of the activity of the self. Contact is the "work" that results in a gestalt. The self (as noted) is defined in part as the unifying center for a particular system of *contacts*; it *is* the system at any given moment. Contact, then, can be considered in the *plural* at a given moment. Contact is with the field (the past universe), including the body and the environment. Contact is defined additionally as *experience*: "experience *is* contact."

Contact also is the *perspective* of the gestalt. Perls describes the "contact boundary" as the "organ of a particular relation of the organism and the environment."[1] For Gestalt Therapy, the contact boundary is defined by the system of contacts, and in turn, the boundary (system of contacts) defines the self at a given moment. As the contacts, in sum, define the boundary, it is clear that they are really the means of relating the organism to the environment. Gestalt Therapy's use of the word "boundary" is, as noted, a reification. As a term, though, it is clear that a boundary is between--in this case the self and its environment. What lies on one side is the subject, and on the other, the object. One "part" of the boundary (a given contact) is the "place" where the self "touches" one "part" of the world, and is therefore the perspective of self's relationship with that part of the world.

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[1] This "particular relation" is characterized by growth, according to Perls. This is also true for an actual occasion: an actual occasion grows as it becomes, grows also in the sense that it is part of the creative advance. The latter meaning seems closer to what Perls means by "growth."

"Feelings," for Gestalt Therapy, also are involved with the relationship between the organism and the environment. Feelings are the last stage of a flow from initial urges or impulses through emotions (to the feelings). This flow is characterized by increasing refinement; as the "charge" becomes more refined, it is discussed in these succeeding terms. It is with emotions, as part of the flow, that Perls specifically talks about the relation of the organism to the environment. Emotions, that is, are called the organism's "awareness of the relation between" it and the environment. As this "charge" (in a general sense) is the same "ingredient" throughout the flow (merely refined at each stage), it is reasonable to consider the *entire flow* (in its various forms) as a means of relating the becoming subject to its environment. "Feeling" of course is another term for prehension.

b. *Prehension*. An actual occasion is comprised of its feelings, its prehensions. (It is also influenced by its *negative* prehensions, its decisions to not include certain past feelings.) Prehension means a grasping or a seizing. The subject prehends or grasps other subjects which have completed their own development (and are, therefore, objects). The subject comes into being by virtue of its feelings of past occasions. These past occasions, from the point of view of the dominant occasion, include the body and the environment as mediated by the body. Prehensions are also the orientation that the becoming subject has with respect to past occasions. They are, that is, the perspective by which the becoming occasion feels and views the past universe of occasion. Prehensions are also the experience of these past occasions. These feelings in the becoming subject of feelings in settled occasions are the subject's experience of these past feelings.

*Both systems, therefore, see the experiencing subject as defined by as well as created by its sub-elements. When integrated, the sub-elements are the final, single (whole) subject* (whether a system of contacts or a bundle of feelings). *These sub-elements are also the subject's means of relating itself to the world (the perspective of the subject), as well as the experience of this world.*

c. *Responsibility and final causation.* In both systems, what can be *called the subject is described as having responsibility for the final actual integration of its sub-elements.* This is expressed many places in Gestalt Therapy, particularly in later works, and is comparable to Whitehead's understanding of *final causation.* This principle means that the entity is self-caused, determining its own becoming in the final sense. As noted in the section on the self as an actual occasion, Gestalt Therapy often tends to ignore the principle of *efficient* *causation* (the causal pole of experience) in favor of final causation when *doing* therapy. Therapists are oriented toward frustrating their clients' dependency on others and attempts to avoid recognizing and experiencing their own capabilities. Clients express this by avoiding responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and behavior; at the same time clients blame others for causing their experience. Clients, that is, overly emphasize the causal side of experience, and the therapeutic response is to emphasize the opposite pole. (See the earlier discussion on the self as dominant occasion, particularly the last paragraph, for a fuller discussion.)

## C. INTEGRATION OF MODES OF THE SELF AND PERCEPTION

This portion of the chapter will lay out the key characteristics for Gestalt Therapy's three modes of the self and for Whitehead's three modes of perception. The most general features to be noted are that each theory contains three modes, two of which are more primary and which are integrated by virtue of the third mode. Additionally, one of the primary modes is viewed as the more primitive (id and causal efficacy) and the other as more sophisticated (ego and presentational immediacy). The more sophisticated mode depends upon the activity of the more primitive in both theories, yet both find their place only in the mixed or integrated mode.

### 1. *The Id Mode and Causal Efficacy*[2]

Certain important features from each of the more primitive modes will be named in a discursive summary (italics will be used to highlight the terms). Following these descriptions the comparisons will be drawn.

a. *The id mode.* This mode is perhaps most basically characterized by *acceptance--of the unchanging given.* There is *no engagement* of the given by the organism; the person is an extreme of *relaxation, passive, being attentive* (vs. actively paying attention). The *sense of the body looms large.*

The *given is the background* (organic excitations, unfinished situations, and habits; and environmental stimuli). The given is *perceived vaguely;* it *dissolves into its possibilities* upon contact. The *content* of the mode is *organized* into *loose associations*; they are *scattered, irrational, hallucinatory.*

b. *Causal efficacy.* The percipient in this mode *experiences the causal efficaciousness--of the past (settled) world* in a *conformal* way. This actually includes conformation to the *body* and the *external world.* (These are the past.) The experience is *heavy and primitive,* though *usually not dominant* for human perception. The primitive *experience is*

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[2] The id has been connected to causal efficacy before. William C. Lewis, M.D., a psychiatrist, associated the two in an article on the "Structural Aspects of Psychoanalytic Theory of Instinctual Drives, Affects and Time," in Norman S. Greenfield and William C. Lewis (eds.) *Psychoanalysis and Current Biological Thought* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965). Whitehead's system is not well-integrated with the psychoanalytic theory in this article. There is no reference to other features of the theory of perception, let alone concrescence.

*vague*, including the *sense of connection or relationship* between self and other. *Exact discrimination is poor*, including localization. The *body*, though, *plays a large* or important *role*; and *its regions are better defined*. What is perceived is experienced as *unmanageable*, yet the *source of meaning*.

c. *Discussion*. Acceptance (of the given) and conformity (to the past world) are basically equivalent terms. The difference is that the latter is more explicitly causal in its connotations; but this understanding is not excluded for "acceptance." "Acceptance" has more of a sense of taking within than conformity, yet again this is not excluded for the other term. Lack of engagement, extreme relaxation, passivity, and being attentive are all basically subsumed under "acceptance." They all imply a "done to" stage, characteristic of perception in the mode of causal efficacy.

The importance of the body in both cases is noted, as is the settled nature of the (past) given (or world). Vagueness is assigned in both cases.

Beyond that, the connections are more tentative. Taking the id mode, loose association might involve poor discrimination and vagueness as well as a simple product of taking in other forms not fully integrated in a unitary fashion. The scattered organization likewise might be related to the same features of causal efficacy. The irrational (and perhaps the hallucinatory) contents might be related to the primitive, heavy and unmanageable nature of causal efficacy. For the id mode, that leaves the sense of the given dissolving into its possibilities with no equivalent, rough or otherwise. Later this will be assigned to "de-structuring" and to the conceptual phase; as well as (in its extension into the "set of possibilities") to presentational immediacy as it relates to propositions.

For causal efficacy, this leaves the understanding of it as the usual source of meaning without an equivalent. This is not excluded for the id mode, and in fact it actually enhances its interpretation in the overall scheme of the therapy's theory. (Meaning is most directly known *in* the body, for example.)

### 2. *The Ego Mode and Presentational Immediacy*

These two modes are perhaps more difficult to compare, for they involve a greater variety of descriptions (particularly presentational immediacy). Only certain central features will be compared.

a. *The ego mode*. This mode is *engaged* with the given, *actively seeking to create a solution* to the problem, creating the self's *boundary* through *identifications and alienations* (self vs. not-self). The self *pays attention* in this mode, and experiences itself as *isolated* from the given--it acts upon the given from a separate location. Its contents are *organized* and *additive*. It is *self-caused*. It involves a great deal of *abstraction* in its perceptions. The *body-sense diminishes* (except in pain).

b. *Presentational immediacy*. The most basic understanding, that of *perception of the immediate present* (or presented duration), ties the rest together. It is certainly involved with *discrimination* of what is provided by the other pure mode, and with the *projection* of the perception onto the presented locus. As part of the mental pole, it is *self-caused* and more or *increasingly organized*. There is *independence* or *essential separateness* in this mode by virtue of the lack of influence of contemporaries. By itself, it serves as the *symbol* (usually) and is correspondingly *barren*. Its perceptions are *vivid and distinct* (with regard to its discriminations). From *PR* we know that this mode involves *transmutation*--a kind of *abstraction* and simplification necessary to perceive nexus.

c. *Discussion*. The understanding of perception of the immediate presented duration is not explicit in the discussion of the ego mode, but it ties in with several features which are, as well as with the strong emphasis on the importance of the "here-and-now" found in Gestalt Therapy. This perception of the present is tied in to the ability in this mode to make discriminations (identifications and alienations), as well as the creation of the self's boundary. That it is also experienced as independent or essentially separate is tied in to the understanding of lack of causal influence between contemporaries, and relates to the ego mode's sense of isolation. The vividness of perception stems from the ability to make discriminations. The understanding of the self-caused nature and the more highly organized nature are noted for both modes. The additive quality of the ego mode is again related to discrimination. Paying attention in the ego mode is related to both discrimination and to self-causation. Abstraction for the ego mode is a factor of transmutation, which from the theory of concrescence is tied to perception in this mode. The relation of the perceptual mode to its role as symbol is not directly correlated with the ego mode; but as symbolic

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functioning is connected with the understanding of both abstraction and discrimination, as well as barrenness, this can be more clearly tied to the ego mode (than was meaning for the id mode).

### 3. *The Middle Mode and Symbolic Reference*

In the comparison of these two modes, one finds general correlation, though the dynamics of the Gestalt Therapy term are refined by Whitehead in more than one place.

a. *Middle mode*. This mode has been characterized by *spontaneity*, which is seen as the *outgrowth or the mid-point of the two preceding self modes*. *Spontaneity*, that is, *is bi-polar*; and the self in this mode grows toward the solution by *discovering-and-inventing* it. *Neither pole exclusively dominates*, nor can either pole be chronically excluded for health. To have health (wholeness) there must be a *free interplay* between the two extremes; even if this is postponed temporarily, it must be resumed for the healthy person. The middle mode is also discussed as the characteristic mode for the *most creative work* (as with artistic creation). This mode also allows the *spontaneous dominance of needs* from one moment or one situation to the next.

b. *Symbolic reference*. This mode is the *reference of the symbol and the meaning*, the *synthetic activity* which joins the two primary modes into a *single perception*. This results in what the actual world is for the subject. It is not direct perception, however, and therefore *can be very fallible*. The symbol (as one component of experience) produces *consciousness*, beliefs, and so forth, concerning those components which are the meaning of the integrated perception. This mode requires a *common ground* between the two primaries; this common ground includes the *sensa* and the *locus* of the perception; and the *body* is the most basic ground in the sense of being the immediate source of the sensa (rock *in* the hand) and the means or point of reference for the locus (in the presented duration).

c. *Discussion*. The integrated nature of these modes is clear, being the synthesis of the two preceding modes. Beyond that, the two have much in common, though this requires reference either to the two primary modes or to elsewhere in the theories. Consciousness, as has been developed in Chapter 4, is a means of intensification of the experience of the immediately presented duration, whereby intensification of experience (and related discrimination and more finely developed reaction to the given) is increased. This is fully compatible with the thrust of Gestalt Therapy, and with its concept of the middle mode. This also points out the two understandings of the middle mode that can be discerned. In one case, it is something which must be in operation at each moment of awareness. Yet it is described in some passages as a peculiarly intense or special mode, resulting in the most creative work. The difference clearly involves the degree of intensity (which is involved with a number of features of the concrescent process).

Consciousness or awareness generally is not described for the middle mode. Yet this is implicitly assumed to be an attribute of this mode, as one would expect from the extended discussion of awareness in Chapter 2. The view of perception in this mode as being fallible is not explicitly acknowledged in Gestalt Therapy; and in this case, this would seem to be an important addition. If anything the implication would run in the opposite direction (this is the best of all possible experiences). The understanding of the role of the body is not developed in this context by Gestalt Therapy; yet the importance of the body cannot be overly emphasized for the therapy. Whitehead's analysis merely connects this more clearly with this perceptual mode. The other two common grounds (sensa and locus) are not mentioned by Gestalt Therapy, but certainly are compatible. They are important, too, to further discussions which connect the two theories (Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead). Sensa relate to the data which are perceived as in the objects of perception and which are transferred from one mode (causal efficacy) to the other. They are also eternal objects, implying that a conceptual phase has intervened between the two primary modes (self and perception). The locus has been previously discussed.

### 4. *Conclusion*

It is apparent that the two theories as they relate to the modes of self and perception are highly compatible. In virtually all cases, one can draw essential equivalencies between at least one major aspect which the two share in common. Beyond that, the theory of perception would seem to considerably enlarge and, as well, more clearly organize the theory of the self modes.

## D. INTEGRATION OF GESTALT FORMATION AND CONCRESCENCE

This portion of the chapter will provide the second of the two-way integrations, that between the contact stages involved in gestalt formation and the phases of the concrescence of an actual occasion. Certain general characteristics will be summarized, then a more detailed discussion of each of the phases, and their sub-phases, will follow. This will be more unified than the previous section on the modes of the self and perception. This is partially due to the complexity of all the features involved; they cohere better in a more integrated statement.

### 1. *General Characteristics*

a. At the most general level, a gestalt involves several stages in its formation, as does an actual occasion involve several phases in its concrescence.

The development of a *gestalt* is described in terms of *contact stages* (note that normally "stage" will be reserved for the Gestalt Therapy terms). These are: fore-contact, (de-structuring contact), contact (with two sub-stages), final contact, and post-contact. The "de-structuring" contact stage is an addition to the original material (necessitated by this present integration, and explained in detail in Chapter 2.) Each stage has its associated characteristics of contact style and figure-ground formulation.

An *actual occasion's phases* begin with the phase of physical, conformal feelings, then the conceptual phase; followed by two levels of comparative feelings. One, the less complex, is called physical purposes. The other is called intellectual feelings, and they include a phase of propositional feelings. In this sense, propositional feelings are an intermediate "step" in between physical purposes and intellectual feelings. Within each of these major phases there are either additional phases or operations.

b. In both systems this becoming process is described as a whole which happens all at once. This has been stated often for the actual occasion, and is inherent in Gestalt Therapy's understanding of perception as a unified whole.

c. These various stages or phases in each system can be characterized by increasing definition, moving from the vague and undefined to the clear and defined. Additionally, the various stages/phases can be seen as "building upon each other" by virtue of integrating material from the simpler stage/phase. This last point is quite clear for Whitehead. For Gestalt Therapy, this can be seen in the description of the associated figure-ground formulation at each stage:

1) In fore-contact, the ground is the body (immediately relevant given) and the urge or impulse is the figure. 2) At the first sub-stage of contact, this urge ("the excitement of appetite") becomes ground and the set of possibilities becomes the figure. As indicated in Chapter 2, the addition of "de-structuring" would show that the ground from fore-contact would provide the basis for the relevant possibilities being purely appreciated. They would be the figure in this case. Then, in the first sub-stage of contact, they would be rejoined with the need or urge to form the "set" of possibilities--tied to the given to some degree. 3) At the second sub-stage of contact, the set of possibilities is acted upon--it is experimented with, hence measured against the actual given including the body and the perceived need.

4) At final contact, the solution becomes clear or well-defined--virtually the total figure--as all experimentation with the set of possibilities is concluded (the ground is used up). 5) At the so-called final stage, post-contact, there is the resolution following the climax of satisfaction. Everything is ground again, as the figure disappears. This clears the way for the next gestalt to emerge from this pervasive ground, based upon the next organismic need or environmental stimulus.

d. The various sub-elements of each system go through a process of integration and refinement marked by these stages or phases, leading to a complete whole, whereupon the process is concluded, and becomes open to the next such developmental process.

### 2. *Specific Characteristics Compared*

When the various stages and phases are examined more closely, the general similarities continue to be supported, sometimes with considerable detail. There is not always a one-to-one correspondence, yet most major concepts tend to correspond. The order below, where this is examined in more detail, is suggested by Whitehead's system; in general the various issues discussed are drawn from what happens at each phase of concrescence (in the order suggested in Chapter 4).

Below are highly summarized accounts of the stages of contact (including their associated modes of contact and figure/ground formulations) and the phases of concrescence. It will be relatively simple to see the similarities. First, the stages of contact:

a. FORE-CONTACT

1) *Confluence*: All is ground; subject in touch with total given;

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totally open to given (creative indifference).

2) *Introjection*: Acceptance of some of the given "within"; the need/urge/impulse/stimulus is the figure; the body (most relevant portion of the given) is the ground.

b. DE-STRUCTURING

Complete abstraction of the pure possibilities from the accepted given (that which is most important for that subject; implied valuation). The given dissolves into its (pure) possibilities. The pure possibilities are the figure; the ground would remain the given (organized to some degree according to relevance--that is, greatest need).

c. PROJECTIVE CONTACT

The "set" of pure possibilities, abstracted in de-structuring, is projected back onto the (here-and-now) given; these are theories about the urge. The given-related possibilities are the figure; the urge/greatest need is the ground (the predicate form and the logical subject of the theory, projected onto the here-and-now). Emotions--the way the world is for subject--may be fallible as means of cognition if mistaken about way world actually is for subject.

d. RETROFLECTIVE CONTACT

Active experimentation with the set of possibilities; the theories are tested against the actual given in order to discover-create the best solution. Experimentation is the figure, the set of possibilities (tied to need and given) is the ground.

e. FINAL CONTACT

The solution or goal is the figure, clearly and fully defined. The set of possibilities is now exhausted; some one or some modification of one possibility becomes actualized--i.e., realizable as the actual solution that is within reach. The self reaches its most intense experience, its peak of excitement: egotism. Then the self, as this gestalt, dissolves.

f. POST-CONTACT

A return to confluence following the dissolution of the gestalt/self. All is ground; a return to the given awaiting the next gestalt/self to emerge.

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The next step is to summarize the salient features of the phases of concrescence.

### a. PHASE OF PHYSICAL FEELING

In general, conforming to the actual occasions of the past (i.e., the given). The past actualities cause the subject (to feel).

1) *Initial data*: The entire past universe of occasions.

2) *Objective datum*: The particular feeling in a given past which represents the entire past occasion--by which the past occasion is objectified. (Certain feelings in past more relevant than others; influence of the initial aim.)

Other distinctions: may be a *simple* physical feeling (one past occasion is objectified); or a *complex* physical feeling (a nexus is felt by a *transmuted physical feeling*; involves the defining eternal object, defining the theme which holds these occasions together --a theme which some or all exemplify, have in common).

In addition, may be a *pure* physical feeling (objectification of another occasion's physical feeling); or a *hybrid* physical feeling (objectification of a conceptual feeling in a past occasion).

### b. CONCEPTUAL FEELING

In general, the feeling of the pure, completely abstracted, unconditionally indeterminate, totally negated possibility. That is, feeling of an eternal object abstracted from the given either directly or indirectly.

*Conceptual valuation*: Valuation up (*adversion*), leads to the felt eternal object being enhanced, continued. Related to relevance. Valuation down (*aversion*), leads to eternal object being diminished or inhibited.

*Conceptual reiteration*: Feeling the identical eternal object exemplified in the original fact. (Subject to valuation.)

*Conceptual reversion*: Feeling a partially dissimilar (and partially similar) eternal object; relevant to the original eternal object exemplified in the original fact, but different in some respect. (Subject to valuation.)

c. PHYSICAL PURPOSE

Comparison of fact felt in phase of physical feeling with the eternal object felt in phase of conceptual feeling. Subject to both valuation and reversion. If valuation down, less likely to continue as purpose. Reversion or reiteration determines which kind of physical purpose emerges. Relates to endurance, superjective nature; efficacy of feeling within occasion and beyond occasion.

d. PHASE OF PROPOSITIONAL FEELING

Comparison of a reduced fact ("it") as logical subject of the proposition with the partially determinate or definite form as the formal predicate for those facts. (The possibility or possibilities for those facts, that "it.") A theory or speculation; directly experienced. May be true or false, but error not discovered until proposition is compared with the given (in next phase).

Feelings involved are subject to valuation, as well as conceptual reiteration or reversion. The physical feeling which supplies the logical subjects and which supplies the (reiterated or reverted) eternal object may be the same (perceptive propositions) or different (imaginative propositions). Depending upon existence and source of the reversion for perceptive proposition, have one of a variety of this general class of propositions.

e. PHASE OF INTELLECTUAL FEELINGS

Comparison of the given fact with the proposition concerning that fact; determination of error at this phase, even though stage set in phase of propositional feelings. Thus this phase compares one of the general classes of propositions with the original fact brought into the subject in the phase of physical feelings.

Phase at which consciousness (as a subjective form) appears. Consciousness is particular intensification of the perception of the data which entered into occasion in the first phase; is of these data in the presented duration (involving presentational immediacy as a particular kind of propositional feeling concerned with projection onto the locus of the presented duration--the here-and-now, in general).

Before moving on to more specific discussion, it should be quite clear that there is a great deal of correspondence between the two systems.

To briefly summarize: 1. The dynamics of *fore-contact* fit in with the *phase of physical feelings*. 2. The dynamics of the created stage of *de-structuring* fit with the *phase of conceptual feelings*. 3. The dynamics of the stage of *projective contact* fit with the *phase of propositional feelings*. 4. The dynamics of *retroflective contact* fit with the *phase of intellectual feelings*. 5. Final contact also fits in with the phase of intellectual feelings (at the conclusion or satisfaction of concrescence).

The phase of physical purposes does not correspond to any given contact stage, though it does lie behind other features of value to the theory and practice of Gestalt Therapy. One such feature is the impact persons make, their forceful presence in the here-and-now. (The phase will find some discussion in the material in the next chapter. It is also an underlying feature of enduring objects, for example, which can be seen as including mental objects. These in turn relate to a person's identity or personality--the "hard" edges of the person, whether rigidity or simply endurance.)

The stage of post-contact is redundant, and finds no correspondence in the concrescent phases. It has value, though, for showing the perpetual perishing-perpetual re-creation of a temporally ordered series of occasions, such as the route of dominant occasions.

### 3. *Specific Characteristics Discussed*

This discussion will bring to the fore certain connections that may be not initially apparent in the summarized comparison of contact stages and concrescent phases done immediately preceding. This will be organized primarily around the material from Gestalt Therapy, for this material achieves greater definiteness through its comparison and integration with the Whiteheadian material.

a. *Fore-contact.* The two assigned sets of characteristics of this stage, confluence and introjection as the modes and the two figure-ground formulations, provide the essential keys. Confluence seems basically equivalent to the feeling of the entire past universe of occasions in that the becoming subject is totally open to the given. It is by means of this total openness that certain portions of the given (past universe of occasions) become organized as more relevant for that particular instance of the subject (or dominant occasion). This is the meaning of introjection, namely the taking in of certain portions of the given (or the objectification of certain portions of the past universe of occasions). This also involves valuation in the sense that these objectified data are actually the ones receiving valuation up (adversion) in terms of their continuation within the subject's development (in order to meet the demands of the organism, certain aspects of the given need to be further integrated). Valuation is involved with the second phase of concrescence and can be seen as guiding the "destructuring" process; i.e., influencing what is taken apart so that it may be assimilated or integrated into the eventually fully unified subject.

b. *De-structuring.* This has been approached in the last paragraph in the remarks on valuation. Valuation has to do with the assigned or suggested importance of a given feeling for the subject's own experience, as well as for the future. It is the eternal objects which are valued, and if valued up they are enhanced in a way that enables the fact which they make determinant (when reunited) to be further considered in the subject's integration of itself. That which is accepted as relevant (including the need and the data that is related to meeting that need) must be valued up, by definition. Otherwise it could not be included any further, or would have diminished importance at best.

The other activity of the conceptual phase which is discussed, namely reiteration and possibly reversion, is not explicitly developed in the material discussed at length in Chapter 2. There seems to be nothing that would exclude this distinction, but there is also nothing that would directly suggest it either. One feature which could be connected with this mental operation is the value of novelty in the understanding of discovering-creating a solution. This creative process would be enhanced by reversion, though some of it at least could be handled without reversion, but through simple valuation (up) plus the activity of the propositional phase as this phase is involved in intellectual feelings. Yet in the more intense examples of these kinds of feelings there would be some which by definition include reversion.

c. *Projective contact*. It should be clear from the way this stage is defined here that it is propositional in form; and is of the nature of the proposition involved with presentational immediacy. Projection as a stage clearly involves the understanding of a theory. This is made even clearer when the figure-ground formulations from this and the preceding two stages are examined. This was done earlier (under the general comparison). To repeat: the figure at this stage is the "set of possibilities." This set is defined in terms of its relationship between the need and the given. It is a set of possibilities about how this need is going to achieve its resolution out of the data provided by the total given. The need in this case would involve the logical subject of the proposition, and the data from the given would supply the form of the predicate. "My hunger (need) will be satisfied by eating a hamburger (predicate)." To achieve this status as a theory, the need must be held off from its full experience, its full actuality; and the form (perhaps, eating or satisfaction, or whatever) must achieve some definiteness in order to be linked in any meaningful way to the subject. (When one looks at propositions of this level, one can sense their tremendous complexity; behind the feeling of hunger is likely another proposition which identifies the bodily sensations with the form of hunger--and so on.)

The discussion from Gestalt Therapy does not deal in any clear way with the variety of propositional feelings delineated by Whitehead. (The theory of propositions as it is relevant to therapy could be an interesting work of its own.)

d. *Retroflective contact*. This stage, as summarily defined, is very close to the definition of intellectual feelings. That is, the "set of possibilities" (which have been identified with propositions) is acted upon in the sense of "using them up"; this is virtually the same as testing the theory, which is one way of understanding intellectual feelings (though does not convey all there is that is associated with this phase by Whitehead). The theory about a fact is compared with the actual fact (in this case, the originally accepted need). Retroflection, in its connotations, though, also involves physical purposes and certainly valuation. That is, this is seen generally as an active, done-to mode of contact, whereby the environmentally directed impulse is turned back onto the self. In the ideal, this is to build intensity in order to achieve the best possible solution. In less than the ideal, this can become an on-going style which spills over into many or all areas of a person's life. Such persons are constantly picking at themselves when they originally intended to pick at someone else. They can actually diminish their intensity as a result, for they never move toward a solution, never follow an impulse to its conclusion simply to see where it goes and what the effects actually are. In the worst possible form of this, they constantly check themselves. This implies a strong impulse, which in turn would involve physical purposes (particularly if this process is excluded from awareness). Physical purposes, of course, involve valuation up in order to be continued beyond the initial physical feeling.

In the more ideal expression of this contact stage, though, this leads to the next contact stage when the solution has been discovered-created.

e. *Final contact*. This also involves intellectual feelings as the final outcome of the last stage. The difference here is that the solution becomes the total figure as it is reached for and touched. This actually involves the phase of satisfaction--the conclusion of the concrescent process. As this may come after a number of occasions, this also illustrates the property that one or more occasions may actually follow in the same fashion as the various phases within a single occasion--moving from the vague (id-dominated) to the clear over a series of this units of experience.

f. *Post-contact*. As mentioned in the initial summary, there is no equivalent phase for this stage, unless one wants to contemplate assigning this to fore-contact and therefore to physical feelings. It is the end which defines simultaneous the beginning. Perls was after the sense of resolution which follows an intense climax. Yet a resolution is also a dissolution, a new beginning.

g. *Conclusion*. As noted, this discussion in the stages of retroflection and final contact does not explicitly mention consciousness; yet this is to be assumed as present, or as the goal if in therapy. The varieties of intellectual feelings, which have only been generally indicated at any rate, are not explicitly developed in the theory of contact stages.

The above is the important detail concerning the four major aspects of the two theories that have been analyzed and integrated. What remains is to suggest the final, four-way integration. Unlike the above, though, this will not be discussed in detail; nor need it be. The connections and omissions, and possibilities and limits, have been sketched in the above pair of two-way integrations. The primary purpose of the four-way integration (below) is to hold open the doors that seem to be there (either discovered or created or both) to allow future discussions to roam more broadly, yet to stay within the same general structure. A future analysis might deal with the role of propositions,

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which seem to be a pervasive and vital element in Whitehead's theory and underlying a lot of what happens in therapy (for good or evil). The variety of intellectual feelings, as well, may clarify these issues further when applied to the issues and facts of therapy. Finally, then, the four-way integration.

## E. FOUR-WAY INTEGRATION

As staged, this will be but a summary of the features under considerable elaboration in the preceding material. This should inform in general terms all that has come before, and what will be taken up in Chapter 6 and the Appendices.

Based upon the integration of the modes of the self and perception done above, it should be possible to see that in essence the conceptual feelings are the "divide" between the two primary modes. Following this division, they are then brought together in increasingly intense and complex integrations culminating for aware human experience in the highest phase or stage. That is: The *id mode* of the self, where reality is experienced as *causally efficacious*, basically correlates with the *stage of fore-contact* and the *phase of physical feelings*. The *ego mode* of the self where reality is experienced or perceived as *immediately presented* (with the detailed discrimination of the data supplied by the first mode), basically correlates with the *stage of projective contact* and the *phase of propositional feelings* (those which involve the world as locus in the presented duration). The *middle mode* of the self, where there is the *reference between the symbol* (usually supplied by presentational immediacy) *and the meaning* (usually supplied

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by causal efficacy), basically correlates with the *stage of retroflective contact* and the *phase of intellectual feelings*. *Final contact* and *satisfaction* are the culmination of the process.

## F. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The primary task of this dissertation is concluded. What follows is merely an elaboration of some of the themes which can be detected in the wealth of material included and connected with what is included.

### 1. *Final Assertion*

One feature which should be noted by way of a final assertion: Whitehead's system, when integrated with an understanding of the nature of human experience (in its broadest sense and its detailed sense) should be capable of handling virtually all human experience when the theory is extended and elaborated finely enough, and is experimentally verified. The latter would no doubt modify and clarify this understanding.

A more specific expression of this assertion is that *the two primary modes in their integration lie behind and produce by their variable interaction our unified experience. These two modes, that is, account for all possible variations of our experience by virtue of their varying degrees of mutual influence at each instance of our subjectivity.*

### 2. *Perception of Monsters*

I would like to offer an illustration concerning monsters. Monsters are obviously important to children. They have the force and vividness at times to shake them--and their parents occasionally--to their roots. Regardless of what the monster or monsters can be described as representing, they can be quite real. My son and I have made up many stories about monsters during the months this project was written; I've obviously had my own to deal with in this, just as he has had his.

The technical issue to be dealt with is how "pretend" becomes real; how mentality enters into actuality in such a way as to shape lives. Monsters, as one may be able to detect when around children, are both scary and delightful. The child (and no less the adult) has a strongly ambivalent attitude toward them, in part because they represent a portion of the child's experience of powerful forces within and powerful forces without.

Of ultimate importance, the way in which we experience a monster is also the way in which we experience God's lure for us. They are both felt by means of a hybrid physical feeling of a conceptual feeling (mentality, in other words). This is done largely outside of awareness, though this may be brought into awareness. (This is true occasionally for the monster. My son tells me that Darth Vader lives in the walls. In other words the monster is hidden at times from direct visual awareness--yet it is partially revealed at the same time.) Even partially clear awareness of God's feeling for us can be sweet and terrifying at the same time--awe-ful!

Technically, a monster is a proposition, likely an imaginative one (possibly an indirect authentic perceptive one). A monster is a product, therefore, of the mental pole of the subject, and as such would be assigned to either presentational immediacy as the perceptive mode or the ego mode of the self. Yet monsters would seem to more clearly belong to the id mode, at least intuitively. This problem is handled by introducing hybrid physical feelings.

A hybrid physical feeling, as one kind of physical feeling, would be conformal. In this case, it is a conformal physical feeling of a feeling belonging to the mental pole of the objectified occasion. It is conformal, that is, to a conceptual feeling in a past occasion, which in this case is the proposition concerning the monster. In this way, the monster (a proposition) could be perceived (in the subject's intellectual feeling) as though it really exists.

The *id mode*, therefore, is responsible for the *acceptance* of the imaginatively created given, but *not* for the imaginative *creation* of the monster. The *ego mode*, if generalized to propositions with their logical subjects projected onto the presented locus, is responsible for the *creation* of both imaginative and perceptive propositions. The *combination of the two primary modes* is necessary, actually, for both the true *creation* and the act of *discrimination* between fact and fantasy (the actually real and the possibly real). The perception of the monster, for example, requires the acceptance of the data (the activity of the id mode), as well as the creation of the proposition (the activity of the ego mode). The actual discrimination of physical actuality from conceptual possibility requires the *middle mode*, where the middle mode is correlated with the phase of intellectual feelings or the mode of symbolic reference. Here, certain of the basic data are compared with the proposition involving the data.

### 3. *Conclusion for the Self Modes*

For the modes of the self as originally described by Gestalt Therapy, one may be able to see a certain redefinition through the last technical discussion. What emerges is an almost complete absence of any particular content with each of the modes. The emphasis instead is almost exclusively on how any content--i.e., particular data--is perceived in the most basic sense seemingly possible. The *how* of perception, or of experience, is only minimally organized.

The *id mode* is concerned with delivering the given into the subject. It is involved with the degree of "in-ness" of whatever is accepted within; in its primary phase, this "in-ness" includes sheer conformity. As this is taken up in higher phases, the degree of in-ness is modified by a number of features, including most basically, valuation. The conformity may change, too. But in its basic or primary form, the id mode of experiencing is merely the feeling of conformity to the causal intention of the given. This is true whether the given is a physical fact or a conceptual fantasy. The given brought in by the id mode lies at the base of all of experience, whether accurate perceptions or fanciful imagines.

The *ego mode* is concerned with discriminating in detail the features of the given brought into the subject by the other mode. It's discriminations involve theories about the present actual or the possible arrangements of the given. These theories are largely if not exclusively centered on the *here*-and-*now* (the presented *location* in the presented *duration*). The theories may be true, may be untrue, and if untrue, may be possible to be realized. These theories, that is, can be quite accurate or quite imaginative.

The *middle mode*, where the person has awareness, is the intersection of these two primary modes. Awareness is produced out of the integration of the id and the ego. Awareness is the finely focused attention, in the here-and-now, on the given as either it is actually arranged as the theory suggests; or as it may be potentially arranged as the theory suggests. It is an appreciation of the actual given (as it is taken up in other phases beyond the primary) as compared with the theory concerning that given. If the given in its primary phase is a possibility, it may also be compared with a theory about this possibility. This in turn would be capable of being held in a contrast with the perception of the physical actuality. The complexity, that is, would seem of a high order when analyzing human perception. It is also important to note that the middle mode could include a strong emphasis on the primary physical, or a strong emphasis on the theory; or both, or neither. If the awareness is of a strong physical actuality contrasted with a strong and imaginative possibility[3] concerning that actuality, then one might have the conditions for profoundly creative change.

In this condition, the aware subject could move with a strong sense of his or her ground toward a truly novel future with a strong intent upon reordering the given. This move to actualize this theory would itself become a part of the given, and would itself be taken in conformally. This in turn could lead to a new theory about this possibility in the given, a theory that also includes an awareness of how the given is (most likely) in the new here-and-now. A person, in the technical sense and in the sense we call "common," would be defined by this succession of such purposes. In a much broader, yet related, sense this can be seen as the unfolding of the Kingdom on Earth as it is in the Ideal.

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[3] That is, a strong negation--the "is not but might be."

# Chapter 6

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The preceding study has gone a considerable distance toward universalizing a specific school of therapy and portions of its theory of personality; and toward grounding a school of metaphysical philosophy. The purpose of this chapter is to pursue this latter direction for the study itself. This will be done by sketching in some of the study's implications for several fields: pastoral counseling, the Church, psychotherapy (particularly Gestalt Therapy), and process thought (particularly Whitehead's). The sketch, which certainly is not exhaustive, will start with some of the general, more philosophical implications.

## A. GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

By virtue of selecting a philosophical statement which is self-consciously and rigorously metaphysical, the preceding study has universal implications. The fundamental reality toward which Whitehead points by definition must be involved in all specific instances that are examined (and experienced) from any perspective. It should not matter which discipline, institution, or individual provides the perspective and the method. Nor should it matter which aspect of reality is examined. By definition, there should be something for everyone (though certainly not all for everyone). By integrating Gestalt Therapy, and its correlated theories of personality and reality, with Whitehead's process philosophy, an additional glimpse of the fundamental reality should be available. In this particular case, the awesome abstraction of Whitehead is given a little greater illustration. The field used for illustration (or grounding) points in turn toward the greater abstraction for audiences familiar with the latter but not the former.

An image that comes to me at times is that of a window. All the various disciplines point toward the same fundamental reality. Any given discipline can be this window by means of which at least some of the fundamental reality can be examined. The nature of the examination includes direct and full experience. If any particular discipline is pursued far enough, using its own particular methodology and developed history, the same fundamentals will be discovered. Each discipline is merely an expression of this ultimate, as well as a quest for the experience of this ultimate.

I certainly would not limit this to the liberal arts, nor would I limit this to abstract approaches. *All of us, in our individual pursuits, must encounter and experience this reality.* Not only do we encounter, we seek for this encounter. *We are all questing for the greater and greater experience of this fundamental reality.*

When I say *any* pursuit, that is exactly what I mean. I do not care whether one is a teacher or a farmer, a business person or a household manager, a psychotherapist or an academician--or whatever. We are all involved in the same process of reality, seeking enlivening by means of our individual growth and interpersonal involvements.

The quest also is creative when pursued intensely enough. We create new actualities which in the most profound and moving instances bring radically new forms into existence. Each one of us in whatever pursuit is capable of this. There may be distinctions that can be drawn between individual capacities and professions, but I am not at all certain that these distinctions make any ultimate difference for the potential to make this kind of contribution. What does matter is the degree of intensity and diversity of experience within an individual, any given discipline, any particular institution. The greater the intensity and diversity, the greater the possibility for these ultimately important contributions.

The quest is not predictable. What is to be discovered or realized cannot be known ahead of its actualization. The path points forward, but the map can be drawn only after crossing the terrain. Novelty of this level yields terror and excitement. The assurance can only be partial, and is yielded more from familiarity with the *principles of the process* than by any past or potential discoveries. We are in this quest together, yet each one of us must move from moment to moment alone.

Each profession develops its own guidelines, its own principles of whatever specific forms of the general process it has chosen to exemplify. The value of this study is showing how these principles can be described at a fairly general yet partially grounded level. By tieing a universal statement of these principles to a school of therapy, there is the potential for a more concrete grasp of these principles, even if a given reader has nothing to do with either psychotherapy or philosophical theology (or theological philosophy). The study includes a highly detailed look at the dynamics of a single instance of human experience. These instances are the data, the experienced objects, the focus of therapy. From moment to moment, it is this with which the therapist and the client are working: the most basic concrete experience, the most specific instance of reality possible. In terms of the self, there is no going behind this to a more fundamental instance of actuality. All of us encounter these data, no matter what our specific situation may be.

These instances, and how to approach them, are described at a partial level of abstraction. This partial level is the theory of Gestalt Therapy. Yet this theory is closely tied to actual experience. Seldom does it attempt to point beyond what seems necessary for adequately outlining the nature of the person--adequate in particular for aiding persons to reclaim their ability to grow. As this study hopefully has demonstrated, however, the theory of Gestalt Therapy is *essentially*[1] *compatible* with Whitehead's far more abstract and universal account of the same process. This strengthens the argument that there is but one fundamental reality which has one fundamental set of principles governing its process. This also strengthens each of the fields brought together. For Whitehead this shows in fair detail the relevance his thought has when brought to the ground in a field that is quite concrete. His system is not merely a collection of internally related concepts in dialogue with other like systems. For Gestalt Therapy, this compatibility with Whitehead can be an argument for the rightness of this approach. In surprising detail, fundamental principles in the therapy's approach are (or can be) clearly tied with universal principles. Gestalt Therapy is not an arbitrary accident, but proceeds quite accurately according to what appear to be fundamentals of reality.

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[1] That is, of the *essence*.

The principles governing the process of reality, partially covered in this study, have greater value when known. Each one of us, I believe, can use greater familiarity with the details of the basic principles. This familiarity, which yields clarity and definiteness, should enable us to stay more effectively with the center of the process; and to reclaim the center by means of our experience of straying from this center. No matter what has happened we can integrate the events and move to the center again. Of course, we are also free to avoid this if we choose.

## B. SPECIFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are several more specific implications that I would like to develop. Much of this is an elaboration of the general implications. One feature, which must come first, is a greater definition of this fundamental reality which these principles describe, and point toward, and thereby bring more completely into our experience.

### 1. *God and Reality*

At the heart of the creative advance is God. God is the ultimate guide, the ultimate director of the process. Through the window, God is visible--but the window (whatever it may be) is not God. These windows, and they are numerous, serve an important function by focusing attention upon this fundamental of reality. This is not neutral or indifferent sight, though there may be detachment as the panorama unfolds. This, though, is the stillness and wonder before the awesome presence of God.

Whitehead's system became one of these windows for me. Working within the dynamics of the system grew to be an experience that pointed to the fundamental reality that is described throughout *Process and Reality*. I came to realize that the experience is the whole point. That which stirs one toward greater experience of God is not nearly as important as the experience itself. This is *not* to say that what moves one toward that source is irrelevant. For one thing, some preliminary sources may be weaker than others. For another, no single preliminary can point to all of God. Beyond that, these all are aids which eventually will be mastered and outgrown, in part or completely. Some have wealth to be extracted for years and years, some for only a short time. Some may last far beyond a lifetime.

These windows are many. There are the many expressive forms loosely grouped as art, specifically painting, sculpture, music, poetry, the great prose pieces; as well as philosophy and theology (in its broad sense); *any* of a host of sources of sheer, intensified experience. There are religious traditions, and their writings and practices. There are the religious communities. All of these (and many others) are potential windows or sources, but none of them should be mistaken for the experience toward which they point; or which they enable people to feel with greater fullness and directness.

## 2. *The Church*

The Church is the primary institution which self-consciously seeks to point toward God. In the contemporary world this is an extremely difficult task to do with either authenticity or clarity. Anything which aids accomplishing this task with greater authenticity, or which produces greater clarity for the Church's mission, should be examined carefully.

Until recently, however, few churches have made use of principles derived from the broad field of psychology, including psychotherapy. Much that has been known for years is beginning to find its way into churches, yet there is still considerable suspicion concerning the validity of this enterprise. This suspicion comes not only from those relatively unsophisticated in theological and religious reflection, but from some who are quite sophisticated. This is due in part to the clear but erroneous view that there is an absolute difference between the enterprises of the Church and psychology. As this study helps to show, both are involved in the same enterprise, even if with partially differing concerns and methodology. What is needed is greater and greater exchange, with the understanding that both parties can and will gain considerable wealth and insight. It does require listening carefully, and this is a tremendously difficult task.

Another part of the suspicion on the part of the Church may come from the fear that its position will be somehow weakened or tainted, perhaps even supplanted by this exchange. My belief is that not only that this will *not* happen, but that what will emerge is a return to the tradition's ability to assimilate and transform those forms encountered in other disciplines of the world. The encounter may transform the

Church in radical and unpredictable ways; yet the truth at the core of the Christian tradition already includes this possibility. Jesus' message points again and again to the understanding that the Kingdom of God will transform the world, will make the familiar world unfamiliar, will turn it upside down: Expect the unexpected from unexpected sources. The Church is certainly not exempt from this message.

Nor is the Church exempt from other understandings developed in this study. The Church is one of the windows by which God is approached. The important difference between the Church and psychology is that the former includes this as the central part of its identity, whereas the latter in most cases does not. As a window (in the sense defined earlier), though, the Church and its various traditions must not be mistaken for God. Yet by virtue of its self-understanding, the Church potentially is able to accomplish tasks at a more profound level than enterprises not so informed. Knowing where home plate is and what it looks like makes pitching much easier.

### 3. *Psychotherapy*

Psychotherapy (as the generic term) is the process by which persons are enabled to more fully and more completely follow the lure for growth and increasing wholeness. In therapy, ideally, persons are enabled to master their inwardly experienced and outwardly expressed conflicts. Conflict may be too soft a word; raging battles in wasteful wars, bitter and extraordinary deadly, may be closer to the mark. It makes no difference, ultimately, whether the war is a silent, rigidly contained one, or noisy and explosive. The damage and impairment amount to the same.

This mastery means the transformation of the conflict. What has been a clash of incompatible features becomes a radiantly rich unity of the same features. This transformation is the creative advance. In its most profound sense, it is akin to what John B. Cobb, Jr., calls creative transformation.

The lure is toward greater complexity, towards growth. Growth is the groundswell, the basic urge, as well as the goal. This is important for therapy as perhaps the fundamental orientation of the therapist. No matter where the client may be, they can and will grow. No matter what happens in therapy, it can be used for growth. This eliminates the need for the therapist to be perfect, an impossibility anyway. This is not license for "bad" therapy, of course. The therapist, too, has the same urges to grow, both as a person and as a professional.

Another feature which this study makes quite clear is that *all* the dynamics necessary for health are perpetually present. This reinforces the Gestalt Therapy tenant of staying with present experience; everything that is necessary is there--not just the unfinished business, but also the means of finishing it. This perspective helps diminish the tendency for other orientations which interfere with therapy. One of these is the superior-inferior stance that many clients (as well as therapists) attempt to adopt. The therapist does not have to "magically" create any missing element or dynamic within the client. The therapist's task is to remain sensitive to when and how the particular dynamic is being expressed. This then can be pointed out to the client. (As with all such support, this activity should be eventually turned over to the client; in fact, the client may start demanding this.) For example, when clients complain of being powerless, ineffective, they can be told how they are presently using their power--to stay powerless! When clients complain about their inability to accomplish anything, there are many things which can be pointed to that exemplify the opposite. (Getting to the session or avoiding the session; completing an exercise or refusing an exercise; and on, and on.)

Beyond this, detailed knowledge of the dynamics involved cannot help but to give greater clarity and precision to those relatively vague hunches which guide the therapist's response and focus from moment to moment, as well as week to week. Knowing, for example, that imaginative and accurate propositions are the forms of our experience of the present suggests the importance of knowing the difference, yet the value of each. Additionally, knowing that novelty results from the introduction of partially identical and partially diverse forms suggests that one of the therapist's tasks is to provide and promote this introduction. If a client says, "I have to do this," and the therapist emphatically asks, "Why?" this may introduce the opposite possibility for consideration. The therapist may choose to not ask why, but may choose to intensify the experience of "having to"; or may suggest the possibility of play-acting the opposite. Whatever. The goal is to break up the given, to introduce novel possibilities, to have clients really look at what they are doing and really experience what is happening within and without. This reinforces Gestalt Therapy's stance of being creative and experimental when approaching therapy.

The study also suggests reordering the view of the relationship between the self and the body implicit in some areas of psychotherapy. The self is viewed as presiding over the body yet inherently interrelated with the body. Causality is transmitted by the body yet the dominant occasion (self) makes its own final determination of its experience. This more complex view includes the perspective found in areas of psychotherapy drawing upon the biological sciences and physiological psychology, though it comes to much different conclusions than those areas. Our experience cannot be fully explained by only that range of analysis. Our experience is not finally determined by those kinds of events, even though they do provide definite influence. The influence is dramatic in some instances by virtue of the vast influence of the body and its events upon our experience. But biological events do not in any way provide an ultimate explanation of our experience, of the nature of the human being, of behavior, and so on. This view is definitely rejected by the perspective in this study.

### 4. *Pastoral Counseling*

I believe eventually we will see theologically and therapeutically trained persons as a new specialty in both the mental health fields and in the life of the Church. This is not the same as a pastor who has a specialty as a therapist, or a therapist who has a specialty as a pastor, but both combined. Neither pole is simply added to the other, but the two are fully integrated.

I also believe that this specialty has the potential for the discovery and creation of new forms of treatment which, though built out of present forms, will profoundly surpass them.

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These new approaches can be developed in pastoral counseling centers. I believe the ideal format for a pastoral counseling center involves recognition of the primary poles of the pastoral counselor's identity: psychotherapy and the Church. The center should remain with strong connections to both poles: other mental health professionals and the Church. Pastoral counselors need to be in dialogue with both--a very difficult task. Yet breaking with one or the other means loss of the vital uniqueness of the identity. In terms of organization, the center should be multi-professional in its staffing, as well as under the active direction of the Church. More specifically, the board should represent several churches, as well as other professionals drawn from within and without the Church. The administrative/clinical director likely should be this specialist; the director will be charged with coping with both worlds, and bringing them together. This requires sensitivity to both.

Such a center can draw value from both sources. From psychotherapy the value to be gained is the continued influx of relevant ideas and methods, as well as the healthy critique of one's therapeutic style and effectiveness. The value to be gained from the Church is the continued influx of basic religious traditions, issues and sensitivities, both in their historical dimension as well as contemporary expressions.

Value gained and created out of the interplay can be shared in return. I believe that the mental health field will find that theological insights, as well as religious experiences and practices, tell a profound story about persons seeking treatment, one that runs to the most basic essence of the entire process. Churches can well use the insights gained elsewhere for the healthier creation of their own communities, both for narrowly defined religious purposes and for their treatment and expectations of each other within each church's community. These insights and knowledge also will better guide the Church's response to the issues of the world. The issues, after all, are expressed through and by people.

# POSTSCRIPT

As I was in the midst of the concluding process for this creation, I began to experience incredibly intense feelings inside. The intensity seemed to be roaring through me at times as I pursued ideas within Whitehead and my own outpouring that emerged with those pursuits. I write of this in the past tense; that is not accurate, merely habit. This experiencing continues; I feel safer sometimes writing about this in the past tense, but this continues within me.

This experience began to thrust itself upon me, me into it, when I first attempted a flow chart of the systems' major dynamics. I was attempting to compress these dynamics down to the essence of a subject, and how form becomes the incredible variety of subjects-objects we experience in the World. Abruptly, at that time, all my conceptual dams began to break and everything seemed to flow together. That collapse was followed by a powerful feeling of depression; up until then I had been enjoying the increasing sense of power that the system seemed to give my thinking.

After that time, I have experienced lulls and a returning of that sense of incredible intensity; it is like a burning spot of nothingness that I'm not sure I want to enter again. And I never thought I would get there merely by thinking. Yet it has been increasingly a process that involves a different order of "thinking," so that thoughts are not thought about distant ideas but the ideas seem to be inside me, and me inside them.

I return to read Whitehead, and I find an incredible texture, something that feels thick and tangible. It is as though the ideas pursued far enough lead into some other process, into a much more fundamental reality. They literally come alive sometimes, and move so rapidly that I cannot keep up with them. Then I feel my own structure, and how the intensity and my structure fight each other. The intensity cannot get through my present structure; it fights to get through, and I am as yet unwilling to give up all of this structure.

The ideas then seem insane; either them or me, I figure. That is, I cannot always tell, even though I sometimes know, whether or not this process is tearing me apart, or whether it is healing, or both. Intellectually I am aware that this characterizes true growth--the tearing apart and the newly created whole emerging or being made out of the old parts. (Sanity is Latin for health; health is wholeness.) But inside this process is a different matter; I become afraid of perishing--while I am perishing-yet-fighting it.

Toward the end I was pursuing the concept of "appetition," a term which relates to God, conceptual feelings, feelings of propositions, as well as physical purposes. I was reading in Part I of *Process and Reality*. Then I moved to Part V. (Part I lays out the "speculative scheme"; Part V, the "final interpretation," concerns itself with the "ideal opposites," especially the one of God and the World.)

I realized, for the first time, how Whitehead is dealing with God all the way through, whether directly or conversely (the World).

Then I realized how my own experience was filled with the converse of my normal world, so much so that the intensity seemed to be threatening to burn through me in order to be expressed.

Then I realized how this was God breaking through.

I use realize in a special sense, for these awarenesses as distant facts, ideas which I have known all along, were being, are being transformed; and transforming me. This is the mental becoming physical--which is the thought from Whitehead that started me on that particular circuit: "The immediate occasion thereby conditions creativity so as to procure, in the future, physical realization of its mental pole, according to the various valuations inherent in its various conceptual prehensions." (*PR* 48)

Along the way I intuitively realized that I understood the full theory of relativity; or at least had begun to really glimpse it in its fullness-where space and time, energy and matter, all flow together. They are separable features of an inseparable reality. I never conceived of myself as capable of approaching that vision; indeed I had worked to stay away from it by avoiding much involvement, let alone expertise, in mathematics and physics. God seems to be the center and origin of creation, and therefore relative to all else.

All of this has become an incredible summing up of my education, from this point back to preschool days. All I have learned, and avoided learning, and not learned, has begun to really collect itself.

I can tell that I am not finished with this process, and that part of me does not want to finish this if it means what I feel it must. Yet part of me does, or I would not and could not have finished this project.

# APPENDIX

The following essays explore some of the relationships between Whitehead and Gestalt Therapy. These essays likely are immature fragments of the larger project discussed in the first chapter. They were culled from almost 100 pages of ideas that emerged and demanded some attention while I was pursuing the main theme of the dissertation.

# APPENDIX A

## SEPARATION OF PRIMARY MODES: CLINICAL EFFECTS

Persons who keep the modes of causal efficacy and presentational immediacy separated will have several difficulties. They will have a difficult time knowing the location of the origin of a particular feeling. 1. If *another* person is feeling angry, the perceiver may assume (without awareness) that the other person's anger is actually his or her own. The perceiver may respond by attempting to stop the other person from being or expressing anger because it means the perceiver will also stop feeling angry. 2. If the perceiver is feeling angry *and* afraid of his or her own anger (not uncommon), the person may have a difficult time assigning the anger to the correct source or location. 3. The perceiver may choose, alternatively, to block out his or her own feeling of anger (which possibly implies knowledge of the correct location of the feeling's origin).

In the first case, this would be confluence. Here one's openness is so pervasive that one does not have a strong sense of self, and correspondingly an ability to alter one's own experience of another's experience. In the second case, one might project his or her anger onto another, assuming it actually arose from this other person. (In this case, the person might respond with "justified" anger: "I'm mad only because you're being so mean." Or, the opposite, "justified" hurt: "I'm hurt only because you're being so mean to me.")

The third case, if the perceiver has an initial idea of the feeling and knowledge of the correct source of the feeling, involves an interruption or disturbance in the highest phase of concrescence. Perls' description of this is neurotic egotism or self-interruption. The way in which this last situation is formulated is such that the two modes (or phases of physical feelings and propositional feelings) are themselves present, but not allowed to be fully integrated around this particular theme. This would suggest some felt incompatibility, which could be the result of the inclusion of a feeling such that the eternal object of the included feeling is not capable of being harmonized with the eternal object of their own anger (in whatever situation, prompted by this particular or any particular cause). This would suggest that the included feeling is receiving valuation at the conceptual phase, but is not being reverted; or the reversions are themselves being excluded for still other reasons. Thus the feeling of anger being allowed into awareness is valued down in order that the other be still valued up in its identical form. Additionally, this would suggest that this included feeling is like or is an enduring object of some sort that would relate to the person's essential personality or identity--the person's self-image. This may represent a fear which at one time prevented the person from feeling or expressing anger at a particular person or situation, or in all situations at any given person. This could be due to the person's fears of what he or she might do when angry--the degree it might be actualized and the corresponding result.

## APPENDIX B

## CAUSAL EFFICACY AND IMITATION

Causal efficacy/conformal feelings would be behind imitation. Imitation is a pervasive way of learning, particularly in the young child. A child will not only yawn when you yawn, but will feel angry when you do--even if they have no particular need on their own to so feel. This is neither good nor bad, though it is true. It also extends, of course, to other emotions and other ways of experiencing and doing. (Subjective forms are conformally felt--i.e., introjected.) Anger, however, is a good part of where many people have their difficulty, within themselves and between themselves and others.

My son will often respond to my feeling tone regardless of what it is, with one that matches mine. If I am feeling energetic, this somehow gives him permission to be there. If I am feeling tense or angry about work, he often starts behaving in an angry, tense manner. He enjoys feeling (and doing) what I am feeling (and doing). I have noticed that at times he will let me know where I am at even if I have my own state blocked out. Recently I had worked too long and was feeling quite jittery. Yet I was suppressing this from my awareness; I thought I was feeling fine. He began to get under my skin with his jitteriness, and my control began to unravel--and I realized that I was even more jumpy than he was. Of course he is not an automoton; he can be quite independent emotionally from me, with his own cycles of anger and joy. And if I let it, this principle can work the opposite way for me with him. If he is having a difficult time with something, and I open myself to him, I can begin to understand what he is feeling with some feelingful detail. This can be quite moving for both of us. Also, if he is in a good mood, and I'm not, his mood can catch me up if I open myself up to him.

# APPENDIX C

## REDEFINITION OF "INTROJECT"

Whitehead's notion of actual occasions being the smallest unit of reality, the one incapable of being further divided, coupled with his understanding of the ingression of pure possibilities in those unities, means a different view of confluence and introjection for Gestalt Therapy. The difference between what is and is not an introject that one remains confluent with becomes a matter of *degree*, not one of kind, ultimately. From the perspective of Gestalt Therapy, anything taken in which is not broken down and assimilated remains as an introject--a "foreign body" lodged in the organism. From the perspective of Whitehead, one can see the possibility of extremely large groups of occasions (in a nexus or society) being capable of being integrated into the organism. Yet, this group is capable of being broken down further and further, in the ideal. The key, for Gestalt Therapy, would seem to lie in the society's capability to be included in whatever contrast it can; its capability of being "fitting," in other words. In fact, from a Whiteheadian perspective, one can make a case for the larger the unit capable of being integrated, the "better" (in terms of intensity of subjective experience).

Further, what is at one point assimilated may, at another, need to be rearranged--i.e., de-structured and recombined. This, in fact, would seem to be the case quite often. In one sense, one's personal growth can be seen to be a working out over and over the foundation which one received and created from birth on. Freud and some researchers into early childhood development have stressed the importance of the early years for their impact on later life. This impact, in general terms, can be seen as a "large" introject which is "fed off from" throughout life. Formal education can be seen in the same light. What one takes in may be quite relevant, or not, at the time received. It may or may not be what one directly needs at that point. What is not now meaningful may become so later on; and vice versa. In addition, what is taken in that is meaningful may be attached to elements which are not at that time. Yet one takes it in as a whole, and only later may discover that not all fits; or may discover later that parts of it no longer fit in the old way. (This is *not* an argument for irrelevant or meaningless education. Meaning provides the bridge, though it does not have to characterize all of what is presented--as long as there is some thread of meaning.)

For example, children usually learn their form of emotional expression from and in response to their parents. They learn, for example, to express their anger and their joy the way in which their parents did (or in some combination). Parents who express joy mixed with guilt will pass this form along; children will take this in on their own. A given child later may discover that the two features need not belong together, and free themselves of the "guilty joy." In a sense, this is how I understand the nature of the individuation which occurs during growth, and in therapy as a part of that process: unhooking the emotional and attitudinal forms which are mixed together, then being freer (hopefully) to recombine them as needed. It may still be fitting to feel and express guilty joy, yet joy now can also be expressed without being always contaminated with (diminished by) guilt.

The same would be true for a potent experience, where a particular response dominated the child. The inevitable clash of wills during Erikson's second life stage, characterized by the crisis decision of autonomy vs. shame and doubt, produces a long-lasting world view. Responses developed during this time continue to show up in adulthood. A given stance by persons in perceived authority (and this may only be in the eyes of the perceiver) may elicit the same response (in formal terms) that was developed at the early age. Such persons may fear prying or invasion or bullying, and respond to these perceived actions in the same way they did then--by hiding, keeping closed, and bullying back or passively withdrawing (or any combination thereof). Growth occurs when the response is freed from the stance, and new responses as well as new understandings of another's actions are discovered and allowed to develop.

# APPENDIX D

## "'IT' HURTS, DOC": PROPOSITIONS AND LANGUAGE IN THERAPY

Gestalt Therapy makes a "big deal" about language, clients complain. One central word that I have learned to focus on is the pronoun "it." There is obviously nothing wrong with the word, except in its use in certain situations. The word "it" is often used as a way of distancing and obscuring. When persons say, "It seems that one cannot really do that," I know that there is something important going on which is being avoided. This can be an avoidance of their personal involvement in or identification with their own bodily states, interpersonal relationships, certain feelings about themselves and about others, and so on. In general, the use of the word "it," as well as others that are related--as in the sample sentence--is a way of *diminishing intensity* of experience and, relatedly, of *keeping distant* and "objective." This usage involves an avoidance of responsibility for one's actions and feelings, as indicated by implication in the sample. The word also can serve to blur the distinction between self and other. At bottom, this stance means that persons are preventing their own growth and maturation.

An examination of this from a Whiteheadian perspective not only confirms this understanding, but also illustrates two other important features. 1) First of all, this focus on language is a more recent development in the practice of the therapy, and one which seems more predicated upon theoretically informed feedback from experience (i.e., empirical) than upon the theory by itself. Gestalt Therapy's theory would *support* this focus, but would not necessarily indicate to look for specifically this expression of the issue at hand (avoidance of one's full experience). The theory would make one *sensitive* to the *potential* to see this particular expression as a symptom of the more fundamental issue. This in turn affirms Whitehead's relevance for practical applications in a more independent and relatively more empirical fashion. The theory of Gestalt Therapy does suggest what directions to move in working with the symptom--in either direction (to develop the stance of creative indifference, to promote implosion, to transcend the impasse, to intensify the experience in general).

2. This examination also illustrates the fundamental similarity between Whitehead and Gestalt Therapy as to what is of primary value. (The issue of values within and between each is not settled, obviously, by one illustration; but this does serve to point the way to this kind of analysis.) Depth of intensity of experience is a fundamental value in Whitehead's system, as in Gestalt Therapy. For Whitehead, this value (really, two joined) is universal, of truly fundamental importance. These values are what are most prized by God, the realization of which maximizes God's intensity of experience. Therefore, it is the aim of God to promote these values. Gestalt Therapy has basically the same values, as well as ones which either stem from these primary values or which serve to promote them. (This will not be argued here in detail. These values are discussed as some of the major concepts of the theory in Chapter 2. Included are the value of growth, the value of self-regulation and self-support, and value of awareness, the value of completing a gestalt; as well as the value of the "wisdom

of the organism," a concept not discussed here explicitly. This "wisdom" is spoken of in the context of self-regulation; see *The Gestalt Approach* and *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* for examples.)

The following is an analysis of the issue from the perspective of propositions, a key element in an actual occasion of the high grade nature of the self or dominant occasion. These occasions are some of the relatively few which are capable of awareness, which is a subjective form found only with the phase of intellectual feelings.

In terms of intellectual feelings, which are a comparison of a proposition with a given fact, this may involve one or another of two issues. First of all, the proposition itself is comprised of the logical subjects being reduced to a bare "it" capable of taking the predicate (form) suggested. The "it," derived from a fact, may (or may not) in reality assume the form suggested by the predicative pattern. The predicative pattern is a partially indeterminant-partially determinant pure possibility. The proposition, in other words, is the possibility of those facts (experienced as partially abstracted) taking that form--a theory, in other words.

The other component of the intellectual feeling is the "fact" with which the proposition is compared. This fact is felt in intellectual awareness as compared with the theory. "This person (the logical subject) is unhappy (the predicative pattern)." This theory is compared with the fact(s) of this person's experience.

What Gestalt Therapy is concerned with is the predominance of the theory over the actual fact. The role of the actual fact is not allowed to play as full a role as it might; instead, the logical subjects (felt by the indicative feeling) are kept at the level of high abstraction. This means that people do not truly check the theory against a full appreciation of the facts; they are out of touch, in other words, with the actual situation. In addition, they retain this mode of approach or experiencing in repeated instances--they chronically avoid contact with full actuality, remaining in a theoretical stance toward themselves and the rest of the given. Mentality in this situation would *not* enter forcefully into actuality.

This in itself means they diminish their full experience at the moment, and for the future. They must make a decision toward aversion, for whatever reason, in the face of the lure toward either adversion or complete aversion. They do not decide, in other words, but remain in a diminished ambivalence. The way out is in part to increase the intensity of either the adversion or the aversion. In one sense, it may not matter which is chosen, for the opposite pole will potentially blossom as well. This can be brought about by focusing upon what they are doing--by bringing this into awareness, in other words. This can be done by themselves (if they are aware of the principle; and if they are able to apply the principle to the particular experience). This can also be done by the therapist.

This returns the role of physical purposes to the self's experience--either in an adversive or an aversive way. In practice this also involves reversion, for a new possibility (relevant yet different) emerges. For the proposition (the person's theory) this also shifts at the same time. People develop a new and broader theory. The new proposition can be entertained initially by the therapist. The therapist may feel hopeful about the client's ability to cope even when the client is not entertaining that theory. In this general, non-specific fashion, the therapist can influence.

Propositions, as well, no doubt can endure over many, many occasions. At the broadest or most basic level they would become the life stance(s) taken by the person (in the style of Erikson's stages, for example).

# APPENDIX E

## RETROFLECTION AND PHYSICAL PURPOSES

The contact stage of retroflection and the concrescent phase of physical purposes bear a lot in common. One way to understand this similarity is to see that retroflection involves considerable self-directed efficacy. The target of the self's influence turns out to be the full expression, as well as the full feeling, of the impulses to act. Instead of playing these impulses out in action upon the environment, they are retroflected back onto the organism. This involves a great deal of physical purpose; efficaciousness on the part of the dominant occasion involves (though is not limited to) strong physical purposes being felt by that occasion, and sent forward as efficaciousness via its superjective nature. This is directed toward the body--either as the full target of the act-in-miniature (nascent) or as an interruption of the full expression of the act. These two, actually, are descriptions of the same process.

The origin of this comes from the concrescent phases of propositional feelings and intellectual feelings. Included within this are the ambivalence or partial indeterminateness of a propositional feeling being included within the self's full experience. Persons at this stage are not sure yet of the proper solution, or of the means to reach this solution, or both. They are prior to the full decision. They are "not all there" in that sense--not at the stage of egotism. Something stands in their way as far as they can tell, and they withhold action in the fullest and most complete (and completing) sense. They are still predominantly in an experimental stance, no matter how close to full expression they may be, or have been. The set of possibilities has perhaps not been exhausted; or if it has, they may still feel that they cannot reach out to the solution they envision. Thus, they remain experimenting, testing, in readiness, building (or maintaining) tension.

If they are "healthy" about this in a "healthy" environment, there may be discomfort--perhaps even a great deal--yet they will eventually reach a satisfactory conclusion. If they have stayed there too long, for whatever reason, they will begin to tear themselves apart in order to find the solution they feel they need; and perhaps, also, to avoid the solution or conclusion that they fear is the only outcome. In its unhealthy form, this contact stage can be seen as the root of an awful lot of organic or somaticized problems. If they are fixated on a solution that is not presently possible, perhaps never has been, and will not let go, they will try and try and try--using themselves as the target for change. This is their impasse.

Yet this can be healthy, too, even in great degrees of tension. The intensity of expression that is potential following a long period of implosive indwelling can be beautiful, as witness the works of a mature artist, craftsperson, philosopher, and so on. The narrowing of options for expression, the withholding of the full response (in the general sense), can lead one to miraculous or surprising results. After a long winter, the flower bursts forth in the tremendous release of spring. Yet, as was quoted in the poem by Dylan Thomas, this can blast the roots of trees, and of the soul. The wintry fever can chill unto death--and the way out may seem too fiery by contrast and by its potential or real effects on those present when the release begins to emerge. This is a challenge in the fullest sense for the person, for the therapist, and for the others close to the person. This explosion can be powerful!

# APPENDIX F

## SYMBOLIC REFERENCE, AWARENESS, AND THERAPY

In the usual form of symbolic reference, presentational immediacy plays the role of symbol, and causal efficacy is the meaning to which the symbol points. Yet the meaning and the symbol can also be considered as two different kinds of experiences of the same feature of reality. In one experience the sense of endurance or of historical involvement is predominant. Yet our perception of a given feature of reality in this mode is vague. The whole is more prominent than are the individual parts (at least if the meaning is perceived as a whole; this is due to transmutation, among other principles, where the common theme in the many come to define the many). The individual parts have little distinction in this mode.

In the other mode of perception (presentational immediacy), the individual parts are perceived quite clearly, at least in the extreme form of this mode. Though perceivers via this mode also have the ability to see wholes, they would also have the more definite ability to discriminate detailed features, to break the wholes into parts (to be re-arranged if needed). More importantly, in some ways, this mode is only indirectly concerned with the past--meaning, that is--for it is perception of the immediate present. What is brought into general relevance by the one mode (causal efficacy) is more clearly discriminated by the other mode. *This, at least, is the case for perceptive propositions,* where the same physical feeling which gives rise to the logical subjects also gives rise to the predicate form. This kind of perception is quite important in therapy, particularly around an individual's more basic themes which are more hidden.

A given stance toward the world in general, including the therapist as part of the world, is so constant as to be extremely difficult to detect. What does not change does not attract attention. Further, persons may have, at one time, chosen to hide this attitude. As this choice continues to be reaffirmed, the experience of choosing, the memory that one has made a choice, as well as the feelings connected with that choice, and the perspective attached to their age and to the other persons involved--all of this drops away. Further, they may have pushed this out of awareness quite rapidly to begin with, for fear of being caught with it "again." So, not only is endurance itself a factor, but also the feelings attached to the choice (such as need to hide). The sum of this is that such persons have lost sight of their choice, including the fact they wanted to lose sight of it.

Yet, this defines what Gestalt Therapy would call an "incomplete gestalt." The whole experience is not completed, for they are hiding some vital aspect of their being, some pole of experience and expression. (Experience, as I am using it, is the subjective side, and expression is the superjective side, of the same "occasion." This is the so-called dominant occasion or self.) This incomplete experience, which may or may not have felt complete at the time, continues to endure, continues to persistently pester. This "quality" demands to be experienced and expressed. The demand continues to stay "alive" at the minimum, and perhaps gains in intensity over repeated occasions (of the scale of years).

This means, for purposes of therapy, that the incompleted situation is always present, always available in some way--in fact, is actually being experienced and expressed, but not in clear awareness. It exists outside the pale of awareness, usually in the body and its more fundamental expressions. This is due in part to retroflection, whereby persons turn back the impulse onto themselves. Thus the expression creates a "split" whereby persons are doing the whole show themselves. They are both victim and victimizer, both the subject experiencing and directing the expression to themselves as an object; and the subject receiving this expression and responding in return. This battle continues to be waged over and over.

Yet what persons do to themselves, they also do to others in some form. Others will be recruited, as well as volunteer, to play out one or another of those two roles. For one thing, persons can stand only so much. It is a relief to act this out on a larger scale, regardless of the side taken (at one level). Further, this stance was first developed in interpersonal situations; it would be natural for them to try to finish this on the larger scale of interpersonal relationships. Thirdly, since this seesaw stance is so pervasive, it is bound to permeate or influence virtually every aspect of their experience and of their outwardly directed activity--hence their relationships.

Again, though, this goes on without awareness. In therapy, both the reported experience and the perceivable expressions are data to be held up to awareness (by both clients and therapists in the ideal). Both sources will eventually reveal the same issues. This may be done in an instance, or it may be done over a collection of such moments.

As this is blocked from clients' awareness (even if it was once a choice, it is still blocked), this cannot be perceived by them with any clarity. In essence, it is being expressed and experienced without the aid of clients' mode of presentational immediacy. The meaning is there, perhaps overwhelmingly, but the symbol that identifies the meaning is not perceived.

Therapists, and eventually clients, begin to pick up forms created by the expression of the meaning, and begin to focus on this expression in clear awareness. The best place to start is with what is actually in awareness, with what is being perceived in the mode of presentational immediacy and then refer this (by a variety of means) to the meaning that has seemed missing or hidden or detached. Some persons' painful attacks of somatic ailmatics keep them from attending a session, particularly at critical junctures. Others profess great desire to change, and refuse to make contact with any feelings, saying every week that things are getting worse, and that therapy (i.e., the therapist) is doing no good.

These contours emerge relatively slowly, vague symbols to still vaguer meanings, yet they *are* there telling powerful tales. How the therapist chooses to deal with them may spell the difference between an "analyst" and an "existentialist"--but a good therapist is going to deal with them in some way. The whole purpose is to bring at least some aspect of it--or to allow some aspect of it--into awareness so that what is going on may be more clearly identified. This in itself is perhaps *the* major step, the major activity in therapy. (This is not to ignore the context, including caring.)

The point is that the hidden portion reveals itself; it tells a tale if it be but attended to and acknowledged. The meaning, in this kind of situation, provides the symbol, which in turn can refer the person more clearly back to the meaning. Repeated somatic ailments, in their sum, tell a story--are the symbol, actually, which refers to the story. The story includes *how these ailments are used*, what effect they have on others, what responses are sought from other persons. The meaning supplies the data which are then more sharply focused upon by means of the symbol. The symbol--presentational immediacy or perceptive propositions in this case--is derived from the same source or the same data as the meaning.

As persons begin to take over this ability to "see" what they are actually doing, they are increasingly functioning in the so-called middle mode. This may not be a "peak" experience, but it can be if it is followed long enough. The more that is in awareness in the full sense (meaning *and* symbol, causal efficacy *and* presentational immediacy), the more the person is "all there," the more alive and vital--i.e., intense due to the increasingly rich variety of kinds of experiences and expressions--they are becoming. Thus, the two senses of the middle mode that can be detected in Gestalt Therapy eventually can merge. (One is *any* function that involves the two self modes of id and ego in some sort of integrated or referred experience; this can be quite uneventful, not what would normally be considered as intense or powerful. The other is a special kind of experience that is more akin to what is generally called a "peak" experience, or a "high," or whatever.) Awareness--the subjective form of the phase of intellectual feelings, symbolic reference, the middle mode or final contact--brings this about.

# APPENDIX G

## "AWARENESS PER SE IS CURATIVE": AN ELABORATION

Perls maintained that "*awareness per se--by and of itself--can be curative.*"[1] (See Chapter 2.) Whitehead's analysis of *physical purposes* (see Chapter 4) both *modifies* this claim while at the same time *enhancing* it. The modification is an extension of the principle of "self-regulated" healing to processes not in awareness; and the enhancement is by way of emphasizing that the most intense "self-regulated" healing occurs with processes in awareness. (The concept of self-regulation is discussed by Perls in the context of the quotation cited above; it is in quotation marks in view of the principles of essential relatedness and essential separateness discussed elsewhere.)

The healing processes of persons occur on a continuum, that is, ranging from the pole of least intensity which is outside of awareness (the unaware ground) to the pole of greatest intensity which is in the center of awareness (the figure). This elaboration, developed below, may support connections between other forms of therapy which work with more explicit interest in the less or unaware features of a person. At the same time, the elaboration strengthens the central Gestalt Therapy principle that the best focus is with what is in the here-and-now awareness (present foreground). It might be noted that the focus on the unaware ground is not really ignored in either practice or theory in

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[1] Frederick Solomon Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* (Lafayette, CA: Real People Press, 1969), p. 16.

Gestalt Therapy. This is seen in an emphasis on formal dynamics over content at times, as well as in the strong interest in the body and related body-oriented therapies.)

Physical purposes, together with intellectual feelings, are the two major types of *comparative feelings* described in detail by Whitehead. At one point, he calls these "two simple types" of the "infinite variety of the more complex feelings" termed comparative. (*PR* 406) This is suggestive, quite evidently, of comparative feelings that are more complex than either pure physical purposes or pure intellectual feelings; there is, as far as I can see now, little explicit illustration of what these more complex comparative feelings might be, though there are some implicit candidates.

One such candidate is the "living person," which is the temporally ordered route of dominant occasions in the human being--the self, for Gestalt Therapy. As noted in the discussion in Chapter 4, this living person is highly unique as far as Whitehead is concerned; and one which is inherently complex, highly variable, capable of great intensity. If this premise is accepted, then the rest of the argument developed below should follow without much debate.

The connection between the living person (the self in its historical, as well as present, sense) and physical purposes is that the former is an "enduring entity." (*PR* 163) An "enduring entity" is the same as an "enduring object"; the terms object and entity are virtually synonymous here.[2] Physical purposes, as noted in Chapter 4, are present in all occasions, and as such explain "the persistence of the order of nature, and in particular of 'enduring objects.'" (*PR* 421) The "living person," considered as an enduring object, endures due to physical purposes. Considering the complex nature of a living person, one can see that "sub-elements" of this total complex unity would likewise endure. The principle of endurance is merely extended to perhaps simpler forms of these comparative feelings produced by integration of various physical purposes, intellectual feelings, and so on.

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[2] "Entity" has perhaps more of the connotation of the subject as creature; it means being.

These sub-elements, whatever they may be called, can be abstracted through analysis of the dominant occasion, in the same way that a single prehension can be abstracted through analysis. This analysis, though Whiteheadian in the sense used earlier, may be like the analysis which can occur in some forms of therapy. (Though this will not be pursued here, this involves in practice a combination of pure and hybrid physical prehensions by some dominant occasion of feelings in other objects--for example, in either the person or the therapist--along with the mental pole's elaboration, and so on.)

A sub-element could consist, for example, of one of the members of a personal "split" which is being kept from awareness. This could be one's capacity to be rough as well as gentle, or vice versa. One could have an introjected command to only appear one way or the other. This introject becomes another sub-element. The lack of awareness about this introject may, in turn, be another sub-element. And so on. More to the point of this argument, there are two ways in which a sub-element can be changed. One of the ways is within awareness, and one is out of awareness (to take the two extremes). The general process of change will be considered first.

### *Change in the Phase of Physical Purposes*

Change effected by physical purposes actually is due to changes in the subjective form of the *conceptual* feeling (whose object is one of the pure possibilities). The conceptual feeling is derived from a given actual occasion (or nexus--i.e., group of actual occasions), and in physical purposes, is fully reunited with the given. In its conceptual phase, however, the eternal object (pure possibility) acquires *valuation*. This valuation (according to Categoreal Obligation IV) is either *up* (adversion) or *down* (aversion).

In adversion (up) the original physical feelings are sent forward to the next instance of the self "with enhanced intensity" for this future occasion. (*PR* 388) This may *increase* the importance of the original physically felt datum (either a physical feeling or a conceptual feeling in a past occasion or, for the latter only, in God). This increase due to enhanced intensity is available to succeeding dominant occasions; the physical feeling (pure or hybrid) so enhanced could have been feeling the preceding dominant occasion, the person's own body, some feature of the therapist, and so on. (None of these objects are mutually exclusive, of course.)

The reverse is true as well. In the downward valuation, called "aversion," one finds that "the physical feelings are (in the later concrescence) either eliminated, or are transmitted to it with attenuated intensity." (*PR* 388) This, therefore, may decrease or eliminate the importance of the original physical feeling for the future. The object of this feeling can be any of the same mentioned for adversion.

### *Physical Purposes and Awareness*

As noted in Chapter 4, physical purposes are not necessarily in awareness (i.e., consciousness). Physical purposes, that is, do not by themselves have the subjective form of consciousness (*PR* 406) This kind of subjective form is found only in the phase of intellectual feelings, which are more advanced (less primitive) than the kind of comparative feeling termed physical purposes. (*PR* 406, 420-21) Physical purposes, however, can be brought into awareness; they can "involve consciousness" when they "acquire integration with conscious perceptions or intuitive judgements." (*PR* 406) (These latter are the two major forms of intellectual feelings.)

What difference does this integration make? Whitehead affirms that it makes a considerable difference:

> The main function of intellectual feelings is to heighten the emotional intensity accompanying the valuations in the conceptual feelings involved, and in the more physical purposes which are more primitive than any intellectual feelings. They perform this function by the sharp-cut way in which they limit abstract valuation to express possibilities relevant to definite logical subjects. . . . Intellectual feelings, in their primary function, are concentration of attention involving increase of importance. This concentration of attention also introduces the criticism of physical purposes, which is the intellectual judgment of truth of falsehood. But intellectual feelings are not to be understood unless it be remembered that they already find at work 'physical purposes' more primitive than themselves. (*PR* 416)

Intellectual feelings (awareness) increase the emotional intensity of the valuation by limiting this to the most relevant possibilities. In a sense, awareness draws a narrower circle around the relevant possibilities, creating a sort of compression that increases the intensity at the same time. This quotation from Whitehead implicitly involves propositions as well, both by the phrase "logical subjects," as well as by the general sense that it is propositions which are necessary for the emergence of intellectual feelings. Physical purposes by themselves cannot issue in intellectual feelings, though his last sentence shows them to be a necessary pre-condition.

### *Summary of Argument*

The above argument does not pretend to explain all of what is happening, or can happen, in the full process of change. To expand this discussion could include a more detailed consideration of the role of the various kinds of propositional and intellectual feelings, as well as the relationship of the subject to, for example, the therapist. An illustration of an actual case, including the specific features under consideration for change would be at least interesting and likely informative. The argument presented does suggest the difference between change prior to awareness and change that occurs within awareness.

In summary, Gestalt Therapy's understanding of awareness as healing has been expanded and placed on a continuum from awareness to unawareness. This continuum involves the degree of intensity attached to the process as well as the degree of relevance of the possible change. Intensity and relevance increase with awareness. What is in awareness can be more intensely eliminated or enhanced, as well as more relevantly eliminated or enhanced, if the elements are in focal awareness. But the same general possibilities exist outside the pale of awareness, even if intensity and relevance are less. They are not non-existant by any means.

### *The Role of God in Change*

All healing is change; not all change is healing. That change is curative is ultimately due to God as well as the individual, according to Whitehead. God in a sense is the central organizing principle which holds everything together in a balance that is fair to all. This whole includes the self as the emergent dominance at each present moment, as well as the variety of interpersonal relationships--two or more of these persons.

God initially (though not finally) determines the role that the conceptually felt eternal object shall play--God sets forth the valuation, as well as the relevance, for the individual. God's primordial nature is the ordering of all pure possibilities (all eternal objects) with the aim of providing God with the maximal *intensity* if they are fully realized in the actual world. God's consequent nature feels the actuality as it is given; the original order of the pure possibilities is conditioned by this feeling of the given. This integration is expressed to the subject as its initial aim for its final form. The "conditioning," in a sense, is the immediate relevance of the eternal objects maximally possible to be realized in the becoming subject.

# APPENDIX H

## INTENSITY AND HEALTH: A NOTE

Intensity must "go someplace." The capacity for intensity in human beings is always there; therefore, intensity also may always be there. Intensity can be diffuse or sharply focused. It may be variable in terms of the total amount (say, as a vector quality to be measured by an experimenting subject), but it likely would stay within certain bounds. Consider all the cells of the body as living; they exhibit this intensity. Then the aggregate of the various sub-systems (strands of enduring objects, such as muscle systems, the metabolic system, the nervous system, and so forth): they would further focus the intensity. Then, the dominant occasion, within its special environment (the non-social nexus); it is always set up or created in some fashion--hence this maximal intensity must always be there, and returned to the larger society of the body.

This means, for health, that the intensity needs to be first of all recognized, and then encouraged (or allowed) to find expression (within bounds--some compounding as during a retroflective stage or phase would enhance this, as would implosion). So, the question is not whether persons have intensity or not, but how it is being expressed--what is their personal style? Do they stay perpetually tense, alert, awaiting the "emergency"? Do they spread it out in boredom and lifelessness? Do they ignore it, turning it on their body, destroying their body *instead* of the environment (through so-called physical diseases)?

UMI

# APPENDIX I

## WHITEHEAD AND GESTALT THERAPY: A COMPARISON

Gestalt Therapy and Whitehead seem to be opposites, yet opposites which move together and occupy reverse positions. The content of the one moves me to the content of the other, and the headings seem to be somewhat irrelevant. Gestalt Therapy places particular emphasis on the body, to the extreme that Perls repeatedly said (and/or was repeatedly quoted as saying), "lose your mind and find yourself." After encountering Whitehead, I realized that this is not a process of avoiding the mind, of necessarily closing off thoughts and abstract thinking; just the opposite has been true for me. True "mind" for me is beyond in the sense of being more inclusive than mere thinking. Therefore one could rephrase Perls to say, "Lose your mere thinking *about* by intensely thinking something *through* --and the 'about' will become 'within'--within you and you within."

Perls laid heavy emphasis, as well, on the role of the body. He so felt the importance of the body that he wanted people to avoid all the diffuse and de-intensifying thinking about; this he termed the intellect. I find that this is not the intellect, per se, but merely a stage in a larger intellectual process. It is true that if one stays there one will not move beyond--unless one begins to *intensely* stay there; to be where one is most fully, in other words.

When I get stuck with where Whitehead leads me--or my encounter with him--I am stuck in exactly the same place as when I encounter Gestalt Therapy's focus: the body. The body is more "real" at one level, in the sense that it is an organ of greater intensity than the single occasion of the self. The body has many more occasions in it than the single occasion of a single moment of becoming of the personally ordered society of the self. This enhances the self's expression, and therefore God's experience of intensity.

Another way to put this is that action is more intense than thought. Action means, in Whiteheadian terms, variability; a single occasion is a single act; action for us usually means motion. An actual occasion does not move, but it does define space--"uses up" a certain amoung of space, in the same way it "consumes" a certain amount of time in its becoming. Therefore, an organism (such as the human body) in motion is thickly variable. As variety and multiplicity (thickness in this case) are really the same (in one sense), this all goes to create or express the greatest intensity possible--particularly when the organism is the human being with its uniquely formulated dominant occasion (in the context of the body).

Thought, in its more usual sense, involves absence of much motion. A lot of thinking is a "retroflective" process, whereby the intensity is gathered by withholding the response. Yet if the response (responding through action) is constantly withheld, then the intensity has to either become diminished, or it will tear up the insides of the body (in the usual sense of body). So, waiting for action--thinking--can destroy in a way that is evil; just as the opposite is also true (never waiting for the compression, the build up of intensity).

# APPENDIX J

## MATURATION OF IDENTITY AND SUBJECTIVE FORM

Maturation can be seen as a process by which the subjective form of the received fact is gradually eliminated until one is left with a form which bears little trace of the original context, and which form fits "in" increasingly well with one's developing individual identity. This increasingly stronger sense of self means a decreasingly weaker sense of "others-in-me"; and provides the strength necessary to be then more receptive of the others who are around in the present. The sense of self will not be as shaken or "revised" by the new contacts, yet will be able to include them in *their* individuality with fuller appreciation. The forms of the experience of, or belonging to, another can be abstracted more definitely until the meaningful essence is found.

This is partly due to the fact that now one does not need as much. Simultaneously one knows better what is needed and who one is and is not. The individual essence gradually emerges as the narrowing of all available themes (complex eternal objects), and the ones that are left become increasingly richer, more intense--and in some ways, more inclusive of other themes--all without the central core being as prone to being swept away. (This obviously can and does still happen; with value as unharmonious contexts are stripped away--and also as new ones become available to be included.)

In terms of development from childhood, the "early" influences of parents and significant others are initially the way in which the child feels the feelings. There may be little or no experienced distinction. Mom feels this way, so do I; dad does this this way, so do I. The notion of "I" may be not even in awareness; the conformation may be quite automatic. This suggests an extreme of confluence to the point that there is little initial sense of self except that provided by the body. Even the body can be or feel invaded quite easily. Yet, in this vast and relatively unselective openness, there is a core sense of the need for identity. This is explosively present from the start, as the infant fights to protect itself from the terrible waves of feelings and needs that spring from internal organs and external presences. Then, in the second life stage, this core of identity begins its foundational process of laying out the distinctions between me and not me. The struggle of the balance of autonomy vs. shame and doubt is the struggle of just how much is and can be me in this situation vs. how much must I hide (shame over aspects of use) and how much is perhaps not me or at least won't be allowed expression (doubt).

Gradually, over years, the others-in-me change from others-dominating-me to others-influencing-me; from *others*-in-(me) to (others)-in-*me*.

# APPENDIX K

## IDENTITY

The issue of identity comes up often in therapy as the fear of a *loss* of identity. The fear is that one will lose something precious, some vital part of oneself, through therapy. More concretely, this comes out (from the client's view) as an expressed fear that the therapist (or someone else) will somehow take this precious ingredient away from the client. Sometimes the client is able to deal with this issue in a self-dialogue. This dialogue usually is between the foreground-actual self ("top dog" for Perls) and the background-hidden self ("under dog"). What emerges from the hidden-self, who stays and is kept in the background, is the fear that it will be somehow swallowed up, made to disappear, and then assimilated by the actual-self (or by another person). The hidden-self identifies itself with its various qualities and resists giving up one or more of those qualities as though it will die as a result. The result of assimilation is feared to be loss of a component of its identity, or its entire identity if the self is completely identified with that element. If it loses its unique identity, it will be dead as a separate being. It will have no integrity, but will be de-structured as an entity and reconstituted as elements in a larger whole (for example, the actual-self). It refuses to surrender, ultimately, its autonomy, its sense of separateness. This is perhaps the central component in its continued existence. This also is the primary cause of its choice to stay/be kept hidden.

Part of this error on the part of the hidden-self is the result of misperceiving a quality as a thing which therefore can belong to only one entity at a time. A child playing with a toy may refuse to surrender it because it cannot be replaced. Only one person at a time can have that particular toy. A feeling, or an attitude, and so on, is not an irreplaceable object in the same sense. Many persons may have the same experience at the same time. Sharing this experience does not have to mean that it is given up to another in the same way that sharing a toy does. Yet a client may feel the same way about sharing the feeling, and so on, as the child does about sharing a toy. *The hidden-self, that is, refuses to surrender or share its feeling or attitude with the actual-self because the hidden-self believes that the quality is a thing which is part of it, one which if "taken" will mean its death in much the same way that a bee dies if its stinger is torn from its body.* In terms of therapy, this means that the actual-self may be prevented from achieving some important integration because the hidden-self will not share its vital secret. (The actual-self, obviously, must be making the same error.)

This problem demonstrates one of the values of a process view as opposed to a substantialist view. This desired quality is not a thing in the usual sense. *This is a quality of a past occasion* (actually a whole series as a personally ordered society). *As such, this cannot be taken from that occasion* (or series). There is no need for the hidden-self to surrender this quality. The other occasion (or series) cannot take over that feeling in the sense of exclusive ownership. What the actual-self can have is the experience of this feeling in the other self, and therefore can integrate this experience into its full self for a single instance or for a life-time. This act by the actual-self in no way, by itself, eliminates this desired attitude or quality as a continuing possibility for the hidden-self.

> This is a new feeling of the same emotion, not that past feeling continuing to feel in the present. In other words, the past feeling . . . is present as the object of the present subject's experience, not subjectively in the sense of still experiencing. . . . This doctrine means that efficient causation, which is the causation of one actuality upon another, is by means of incarnation in the other. We influence each other by entering into each other.[1]

This means, in the terms of the issue of identity, that no one, no "self" whether hidden or actual, has to suffer any loss. Incarnation in the sense used in the quotation above means to make fully actual, or to embody the quality which has been felt in the other. The other, however, remains in actuality a complete whole. It is not somehow divided up or split apart. Yet certain portions of its experience, set always in the context of its total experience, may be selectively appreciated or felt more than others. These feelings from the objectified occasion may also "demand" being felt (their superjective nature, in Whitehead's terms).

What can actually happen is that one self gains a possibility which is being repeatedly actualized in another self. The growth of the actual-self is not at the expense of the hidden-self. Yet there is a danger to the hidden-self as a continuing series, even if not to the single instance of that series. The danger is that the hidden-self may eventually be included in the actual- (seen-to-be-me) self. If this were to happen (and this is a goal of Gestalt Therapy, namely the integration of all facets of the person into a single whole), then it would be the death of that particular identity. That particular serial order would come to an end as a unique chain. Its history (and its future) would become part of the history (and future) of the actual-self. That this may happen is due to the gradual integration of various features of the hidden-self as the hidden-self becomes less and less hidden and identified increasingly as the actual-self. The various characteristics which it comes to share in common provide the bridge.

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[1] John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), p. 23.

If the hidden-self can be assured somehow that what it prizes most will never be lost, it may wish to become more open. It may come to feel that the world (including the actual-self and the therapist) is trustworthy. It may be reassuring for the hidden-self to be left alone, and for the actual-self to know that the latter does not have to necessarily depend upon its resisting side for the quality which it needs. This quality, whatever it may be, may come from another person, such as the therapist. The actual-self is not limited to its own history, nor to the history of its full personality (which in this sense includes the hidden-self). This would mean transcending the hidden-self and its obstacles. This still, though, may be experienced as a threat.

It may also be reassuring for the hidden-self to know this general process world view. It may be reassuring for it to know that it is actually doing what it fears the most, as well. By maintaining its continued existence, that is, this self also must be apprehending this central ingredient from prior occasions in its series. This means that this ingredient continues to demand an existence of its own, regardless of "location." This particular quality has a strong sense of its own importance, whether in consciousness or not. As a sub-element in the occasion it is endowed with a strong sense of *physical purpose* with the *subjective form* of *adversion* (meaning that the subject tends to preserve or enhance the basic physical feeling which illustrates this quality and passes this on to succeeding occasions).

### *Physical Purpose in the Hidden-Self*

Physical purpose, as a characteristic of an occasion, arises in the third phase of concrescence as an alternative to propositional feelings. Physical purpose results when the pure possibility is fully reunited with the felt fact. If the pure possibility retains some of its indefiniteness with respect to actuality, then the result is a proposition and correspondingly, propositional feelings. A physical purpose cannot by itself reach awareness, for the occasion in a sense terminates at this point. It has decided to be almost exactly like its predecessor. The only change which can be effected at this point is whether or not its subjective form will be *adversion* or *aversion*. *Ad*version means that it will retain its sense of importance for the future, its identity in a sense. *A*version, by contrast, means that it has decided to become less important for the future, to the point of elimination. In terms of physical purpose, aversion (decreased importance) is the only possible change. Thus adversion (continued importance) is the subjective form which would help support identity.

The hidden-self, then, must include a strong element of physical purpose with the subjective form of adversion. This would help account for both its persistence and for its hiddenness (in the sense of being out of awareness). The therapeutic goal would be to transform the decision to remain out of awareness by means of changing physical purposes to propositional feelings. Propositional feelings can be carried into awareness, if integrated with a physical feeling and thereby becoming an intellectual feeling. In the terms of Gestalt Therapy, this means that one of the problems is the result of remaining at the id pole of experience for certain portions of one's experience, and not allowing the experience to develop into an ego mode experience. This ego mode counterpart, whether seen as a propositional feeling or as perception via presentational immediacy, must be allowed to develop out of the basic id mode (causal efficacy/physical feeling) experience.

### *Awareness is Curative*

How can this be done? Through awareness. If one can see what one is doing, experience what one is experiencing, then the hiddenness will be removed--by definition. This is a lot of work. It is also frightening in the ultimate sense. Ultimate fear is fear of death, whether seen as bodily death or death of one's identity. One's identity is what is in danger of being taken over or otherwise eliminated. Perhaps the first stage, as Gestalt Therapy would suggest, is passive experience--awareness--without any move or suggestion for activity. Awareness does not by itself mean death. It simply will allow the ground which is contacted to develop into a more sophisticated experience.

This is clearly what Perls meant by the statement that awareness by itself is curative. Awareness is the base of one's experience (if awareness is understood as the equivalent of the id mode-causal efficacy experience). Obviously awareness is, itself, an intellectual feeling. The sense, though, is that awareness in its purest sense must begin with this physical feeling. Without the physical feeling there is no real fact of experience. The experience can be only indirectly (and probably weakly) felt by means of conceptual reversion (either in the object or in the becoming subject). It is not in itself a fact in a physical sense.

If one recalls the important role that a physical feeling has in the development of the most sophisticated feeling Whitehead describes, then one can see clearly the importance of physically feeling hidden aspects of the psyche. Only through this can one begin to make this experience one's own in a concrete or actual sense. Only this way, that is, can the dominant occasion include all of the person's potential. Any portion of the experience which remains hidden cannot be truly integrated, particularly in a novel fashion. (The exceptions are through conceptual reversion or elimination. The latter, though novel, is not integration in the positive sense). Perhaps we do not want to bring into awareness our experience of our heart beat, at least all of the time. Yet, perhaps we do, some of the time. This can be done through biofeedback training. Awareness of breathing can be important to growth. Breathing can, for most persons, be an experience which can be brought into awareness or left out of awareness. One can decide to hold one's breath for quite some time, over-ruling the decision usually made to have a certain rhythm to the process. Yet this cannot be done by the individual's aware choice for too long. Eventually the body reclaims its right to continue the process, whether in awareness or not.

The level of experience being discussed here, however, is far more sophisticated than the experience of breathing or regulation of other basic life-support processes. (They are, of course, quite complex processes; the difference is relative.) What is being looked at here might be called a sub-self, that is, the hidden-self. This is much more inclusive, and has different qualities of definition. It has a complex of features which endure over many occasions, and in that sense, has a soul of sorts. Yet even this is not completely unique. This particular entity, the hidden-self, also is capable of being self-aware--of reflecting upon or objectifying itself in a special way that includes recognition that "this is me." This latter quality is perhaps what most uniquely defines it as a true self. It is also capable of being the dominant occasion in this respect and still retaining its identity.

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The following bibliography, compiled largely in September, 1976, includes the then-published works in Gestalt Therapy and in process thought related to the major themes discussed in the dissertation. This should function as a research bibliography for additional work along the lines of the dissertation, as well as a foundation to which subsequently published works may be added.

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